COMMUNICATION STRATEGY AND POLITICAL ASCENT

by

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Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

A quick survey of social science literature seems to reveal the need for an interdisciplinary approach to the study of many issues that have traditionally been confined to one or two disciplines. The phenomenon of charismatic leadership* is one such issue that appears to receive sufficient attention only in the areas of Political Science and Sociology. An adequate understanding of this phenomenon is especially vital for many a third world country that, frequently, finds little beyond the wisdom -- or lack of it -- of a leader to hold its many diverse elements together.

There are also problems endemic to these countries that render the task of building a viable nation-state an extremely difficult one to tackle. This is not the place to provide a comprehensive catalogue of these problems, but suffice it to say that the absence of institutional and democratic processes and the inability of the state to replace loyalty to the tribe or the province with loyalty

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*Charismatic leadership, according to Max Weber, is "a certain quality of an individual personality by which he is set apart from ordinary men and treated as endowed with supernatural, superhuman or at least specifically exceptional powers or qualities". (From The Theory of Social and Economic Organization by Max Weber, p. 358.)

to its own institutions seem to be among the factors leading to the emergence of the leader increasingly known as the charismatic personality.

The charismatic leader, however, is not a third world phenomena. Churchill, DeGaulle, Hitler and Stalin have all been described as charismatic leaders. But these men are all, in one way or the other, inheritors and custodians of states whose political traditions and experience in the world of nation-states is well established. Such, of course, is not the case with Ghana, Indonesia, and a multitude of other third world countries. They are invariably thrust into a world characterized by the dominance of the nation-state. It is a world in which their mere survival, not to mention development, is predicated upon their acceptance of and compliance with a system of centralized authority and institutions.

This centralization and focusing of authority relationships has paved the way for the emergence of a new, and mostly western, brand of leadership. Individuals such as Ghandi, Nkrumah, Sukarno, and Nasser are but a few examples of this new species of leadership. In order to be successful, the leader is required to perform two sets of roles: (1) He must be able to provide a leadership that supersedes and compensates for traditional leadership. His relationship with his followers must be both inspirational and a fulcrum that is capable of representing and

maintaining the various brands of leadership preceding his emergence. He must become a true father-figure providing experience, firmness, compassion and trust that he is capable of navigating the national destiny through the unfamiliar terrain of the new world. (2) The leader must also become a catalyst around whom the various social elements can be grouped and mobilized for the task of solving ethnic, political, economic and social problems.

All brands of leadership depend, to some extent, upon an adequate system of communication between the leader and the followers. Some even perceive it as "a process of communication, or connection between leader and followers" (Deutstch 1966:157). Communication between leader and followers in a traditional setting is mostly based on a face-to-face approach. The leader provides inspiration or arouses trust by his presence, example and availability. This is impossible in the nation-state setting since the leader must maintain a reasonable distance in order to be able to perform all of his responsibilities.

I. The Purpose of the Thesis

The preceding discussion is intended to point out the two central and interdependent themes running through this thesis. Briefly stated, these themes are:

A. Charismatic leadership exists in emerging countries of the third world due mainly to the fact that other forms of leadership are incapable of overcoming simultaneously the multitude of problems facing these countries and the disintegrative tendencies inherent in provincial or tribal sentiment and loyalty.

B. An effective system of communication is essential to practically all brands of leadership. However, its import for charismatic leadership takes on an immediacy and a higher degree of significance due to the specific, situational context in which the leader appears and functions.

An adequate understanding and appreciation of these two themes can only be attained through a discussion and clarification of some questions relative to:

A. What are the specific characteristics that distinguish charismatic leadership from other forms of leadership. Put somewhat differently, this question becomes: at what point does the leader cross the demarcation line separating the charismatic from the non-charismatic leaders?

B. What are the relevant and specific cultural beliefs and needs contributing to the rise of charismatic leaders? Do these needs and beliefs vary from culture to culture and what is the significance of such variance?

C. What is the specific nature of the leader-follower relationship?

D. What type of communication strategy is especially relevant to the needs of charismatic leaders? What cultural symbols and myths are used, and how do national causes and the manner in which they are articulated contribute to the process of image promotion and eventually elevation of the leader?

E. What are the elements of a communication system suited to the sustenance of charismatic leadership? What elements of this system are important and what parts are absolutely crucial?

Answers to these questions are necessary to satisfy our "need to know what the charismatic leader does to assert and impose his authority over those he presumes to lead and how he does it", according to Ann R. and Dorothy Willner. Most of the research (and writings) concerning this phenomenon clearly indicates that conclusive answers to these and other questions are not yet attainable. This is partly due to the fact that most writers seem to suggest (i.e. R. Tucker, the Willners, Shill, etc.) that universal criteria for the detection of charismatic leadership can be estab-

lished. The feasibility of such an approach is not within the range of this thesis. Rather, the goal is to take a different path suggesting the viability of this concept within a third world context.

More specifically what this thesis attempts to demonstrate is that for the first time in the recent history of the third world, political authority -- i.e. charismatic leadership -- has been based not on the leader's capacity for religious appeal, not on a cohesive and well disciplined party structure, and not on a clear ideological commitment, but on a thorough and efficient use of all available channels of communication. The spark and the impetus responsible for the initial emergence of the leader may be the result of a heroic act (i.e. the nationalization of the Suez Canal in Egypt, or the formal independence from a colonial power in Ghana, Indonesia etc.). But the development of the charismatic image, and the follower's identification with the leader can only come about through a communication design that enables the leader to keep in "constant touch" with the population. Charisma, thus perceived, is not <u>only</u> the result of solid and visible accomplishments in the economic, military or political spheres.

But even within a third world context it is virtually impossible to make sweeping generalizations about a charismatic "pattern". For in each case the leader is confronted with a different set of circumstances that render

mere duplication a remote occurrence. Upon assuming the mantle of leadership, he is thrust against the constraints of a colonial background, on the one hand, and the constraints of a peculiar cultural milieu on the other. Thus, it can be safely argued that the India Ghandi helped liberate from under the yoke of British imperialism with its numerous castes and its different languages was vastly different from the Ghana that Nkrumah inherited from the same colonial power.

These and other differences relevant to the emergence of the charismatic leader play a decisive role as far as the development of a charismatic situation is concerned. Discussion of these issues will be deferred to the section devoted to the theory and application of the charismatic concept. For the purposes of this limited and introductory discussion suffice it to state that two requirements are absolutely essential for the fulfillment of a charismatic situation. First, the leader needs to mold a solid base of followers. In other words he needs a constituency and an audience. Unlike other forms of leadership, the charismatic leader requires and demands interaction and feedback on as regular and recurrent a basis as the situation allows. One cannot emphasize enough the value of a sound system of feedback to a leadership whose survival is not so much a function of its accomplishments as it is a function of its ability to forge a common identity with the people. David

Easton saw the capacity of a system to persist in the face of stress as a "function of the presence and nature of the information and other influences that return to its actors and decision-makers" (Easton 1965:25). The second requirement, and one that is equally crucial, is the availability of or the creation of a cause that can serve as a rallying point. However, causes vary in intensity and appeal, but the charismatic leader's success in demonstrating the significance of his cause is essential to the creation of a charismatic situation.

Once the charismatic situation is realized, the leader turns his attention to its maintenance and perpetuation. This is usually accomplished in a variety of ways, some of which are:

(1) The leader responds effectively to the perceived and real needs of the population. His ability to bring about major reforms and to improve the standard of living of the population become central to his charismatic appeal. Realistically, this is easier said than done since the problems and their solutions may be beyond his reach (overpopulation, lack of adequate resources, international, economic and political considerations, lack of technically and bureaucratically trained personnel, etc.). There is also the question of the leader's ability and willingness to tackle tedious administrative responsibilities. Capable

or not, the leader needs to show some kind of movement toward the solution of national problems.

(2) The charismatic leader may choose to appeal to the nation's need for a father-figure as well as its need to forge a common identity. The leader, thus, focuses his attention on promoting the image of a savior, a pioneer, and an indispensible navigator of national destiny. Many a charismatic leader has been known to encourage the circulation of labels such as Bung Karno, the Rais (Nasser) and the Savior (Nkrumah). Once the leader's image is successfully linked to "the national cause" it assumes a transcendental quality toward which the citizenry may feel a remarkable degree of attachment. Needless to say, this path demands a special knowledge and appreciation of the various means of communication and persuasion available to the leader.

These two strategies are not mutually exclusive. All leaders need to communicate to their followers their perceptions of the present and their dreams for the future. But there is a marked difference between the use of communication channels as substitutes for solid accomplishments, and their use as methods of clarification and guidance.

Drawing on this conceptual framework, the major thrust of this thesis will, then, be an attempt to answer the following questions: (1) What, exactly, is charismatic

leadership? In other words, what are the distinctive features that make it different from other types of leadership? (2) Under what circumstances does this phenomenon usually emerge? Are there specific circumstances and beliefs inherent in an emerging nation's makeup that contribute to its growth? Put somewhat differently, what follower's need and what cultural components give rise to charismatic leadership? (3) What part does the leader's communication ability and consciousness play in promoting his charismatic image? What methods and strategies of communication are adapted and employed, and with what effect?

Admittedly, no single study is capable of providing exhaustive and definitive answers to such broad questions. Rather, the goal is of a much humbler nature since the answers and the conclusions are both suggestive and tentative. The fact that this study will, in some depth, deal with only one third world country and with only one leader puts further limitations on its generalizability. But the case for studying Nasser's so-called charismatic brand of leadership, and the communication strategy on which it largely depended, is a compelling one. For in many ways Egypt is representative of a large number of third world countries. It is a country plagued by overpopulation, lack of adequate resources, a long and repressive colonial background and a population that until the last few years depended almost totally on ancient methods of land utilization.

But it is in Egypt, more perhaps than in any other third world country, that a leader has been successful in effecting what Daniel Lerner aptly termed "a communication revolution" (Lerner 1958:251). National consensus, and later, national acceptance of the leader have largely been engineered through a meticulous and emotionally charged exploitation of the various methods and channels of communication. Thus, concentrating on certain "crucial" periods and events of Nasser's presidency, an attempt will be made to illuminate certain aspects of his leadership, and the extent to which his continuity and survival in office after severe, and crushing defeats is attributable to the communication revolution Lerner spoke of.

II. Organization

Thus the second chapter will be basically devoted to an exploration of the various classifications of leadership, followed by a review of the literature devoted to charismatic leadership. An attempt will be made to show the critical features and components of the concept which hopefully will enable us to present a comprehensive operational definition of charismatic leadership. Besides this definitional attempt, an effort will be made to show both the relevance and the significance of this phenomenon to a systematic understanding of the politico-social processes

at work in most third world countries and the communication strategies and networks necessitated by these processes.

This new significance that communication strategy seems to assume in the emergence of charismatic leadership raises a serious question. Is this brand of leadership so crucially dependent for its emergence and maintenance on certain technological and political transformations similar to that envisaged by Weber? Whereas Weber's charismatic leadership seems to inhere almost entirely in qualities that are both transcendental and peculiar to the individual leader, this new phenomenon seems to reside largely in circumstances and elements drawn from the environment. The inadequacy of the Weberian formulation will, it is hoped, be pointed out and a new label for the phenomenon suggested.

The third part will be concerned with a number of questions related to the interplay between communication patterns, language structure including the choice of words and concepts and its impact on personality and cognitive structure in the contemporary Arab world. Many students of Arab culture have suggested that Arabic, as a language, is one of the most crucial factors to be taken into consideration in any attempt at an adequate understanding of the emotional and intellectual components of that culture.

This assessment, if correct, has tremendous implications for the prevalence of certain communication channels

and the emergence of certain types of political leadership in the area.

With a Whorfian hypothesis as our point of departure, a number of studies purporting to uncover the special significance of the Arabic language to the emotional and intellectual development of the individual Arab will be discussed with an eye to the communication receptivity engendered by this situation.

The fourth chapter will be devoted to the case study. Following a brief description of the social and political conditions preceding and leading to Nasser's rise, we shall address ourselves to the following questions: (1) What evidence of the presence or the absence of a natural charisma can we point to in the early part of Nasser's career? (2) What kinds of communication and persuasion methods were used during this era? And with what effect? (3) Can we find linkages between the emergence of the "embryonic features" of a charismatic leadership, and the improvement in the leader's use of persuasion techniques? (4) What adjustments in the use of these techniques are the result of shifts in the international and local conditions?

A discussion of Nasser's oratorical style and the special emphasis he put on the use of radio, television, the press, songs and the various face-to-face efforts using opinion leaders will be central to this part of the study.

This will be directly linked to the rise of his charismatic fortunes. The leader's use of cultural symbols and myths will also be alluded to. It is virtually impossible to gauge with certainty and precision the exact contribution of the leader's use of communication and persuasion techniques to the maintenance of his leadership position, but that will not deter us from bringing the weight of historical evidence to bear on this aspect.

The study will, then, be concluded with a synthesis of the previous chapters out of which certain conclusions will hopefully be drawn. These conclusions will fall into two general areas of concern. The first area is the question of whether charismatic leadership is a genuine and original characteristic of the leader, or whether it is a learned trait developed either in response to popular needs or formed by shrewd observers of the human mind. A second domain of concern revolves around the question of whether a leader's survival in office is attributable to his effective use of the various communication facilities.

Chapter II

LEADERSHIP AND SITUATION

Interest in leaders and leadership qualities is one of the most recurring themes in human literature. Repetition, however, does not mean exhaustion. The numerous and different definitions of leadership seem to reflect this fact. This confusion is further complicated by situational and cultural factors. For what is appropriate leadership behavior in a military organization may be the wrong leadership behavior in an insurance agency. Culture exerts still more complications since strict but appropriate leadership standards in one culture may be seen as cruel and excessive in another.

Nevertheless this persistence of interest in leadership is easily explainable. Cartwright and Zander noted that, "Leadership is viewed as the performance of those acts which help the group achieve its preferred outcomes" (Cartwright and Zander 1960:492). Leadership, thus seen, is an important human activity whose value is measured by its ability to preserve and advance both the individual and group.

Defining Leadership: As was mentioned earlier, the variety of perspectives within which the subject has been approached seem to account for the numerous definitions

one encounters. Fred E. Fiedler and M. Chemers in their book Leadership and Effective Management, cite at least six different definitions of leadership. Here are some of these definitions:

"Leadership is the exercise of authority and the making of decisions" (Dublin, 1955).

"The leader is one who succeeds in getting others to follow him" (Cowley, 1928).

"Leadership is the process of influencing group activities toward goal setting and goal achievement" (Stogdill, 1948).

The authors then make two observations concerning the nature of leadership. "The first," they maintain, "is that leadership is a relationship between people in which influence and power are unevenly distributed on a legitimate basis . . . The second important thread is that there can be no leaders in isolation."

Needless to say, Fiedler and Chemers are speaking with one kind of leadership in mind, namely management leadership. However, all kinds of leadership demand some basis of legitimacy --varying in broadness -- and all sorts of leadership dictate a leader-follower relationship.

Beyond this cursory look at definitional attempts, two other points concerning the nature of leadership seem to meet wide acceptance in the field.

A -- Based upon a comprehensive survey of 124 books and articles which reported attempts to study the traits and characteristics of leaders, R. M. Stogdill offered the following conclusion: "The average person who occupies a position of leadership exceeds the average member of his group in such abilities as intelligence, scholarship, knowing how to get things done, insight into situations, verbal facility, and adaptability" (Shaw 1971:269).

B -- Another approach stresses the situation in which the leader finds himself. "Leadership," states W. O. Jenkins "is specific to the particular situation under investigation" (Jenkins 1947:54). The strongest support for this approach, however, comes from the extensive studies conducted by F. E. Fiedler (1964, 1967) regarding the Contingency Model of Leadership Effectiveness. Fiedler summed up the results of his studies thus "The Contingency Model leads to the major hypothesis that leadership effectiveness depends upon the leader's style of interacting with his group members and the favorableness of the group-task situation" (Fiedler 1968:81).

This emphasis on the dynamic relationship between the demands of the situation on the one hand, and the leader-follower attraction on the other is central to the distinction this study purports to draw between the charismatic leader and other kinds of leadership.

Max Weber's concept of Charismatic Leadership is certainly one of the most debated concepts in the social sciences today. The debate centers around a number of seemingly relevant questions:

A -- What makes a certain leader charismatic?

B -- Of what utility, in Weber's view, is this concept to an understanding of our contemporary world? In other words, can a concept so grounded in the religious realm have much relevance to an increasingly secular world?

C -- What explanatory potential does the concept have for the post-colonial leaderships common to most third world countries?

In answering the first question we shall attempt to delineate Weber's formulation of the concept, and its further explanation and elaboration by others. Criticisms and objections concerning the concept's utility and viability will, then, be pointed out. Consequently, the concept's relevance -- or lack of relevance -- for understanding the problems and challenges of leadership in third world countries will be addressed.

It is hoped that discussion of these issues will be beneficial in the attempt to show that what passes for charismatic leadership in many a third world country is radically different from Weber's original conception and formulation. Central to this analysis is an acute appreciation of

the impact of the various means of persuasion -- namely communication channels -- now available to the leader.

I -- Review of the Literature

Max Weber's interest in authority relationships and the various methods by which authority gains legitimation (i.e. acceptance of the leader's exercise of power because it is in line with values held by the subjects) have been central to his work and contributions. His classification of authority legitimation falls into three "ideal" types:

1. Traditional Authority: respect for traditional authority is based on "an established belief in the sanctity of immemorial traditions".
2. Charismatic Authority: rests on the belief that the leader is gifted with a magnetic and superior leadership quality.
3. Bureaucratic or rational-legal authority: Legitimacy in this category is derived from the population's acceptance of a binding set of abstract rules.

It is in the second category -- charismatic authority -- that we are interested. Weber's often quoted definition of charisma is that it is: a certain quality of an individual personaltiy by virtue of which he is set apart from ordinary men and treated as endowed with supernatural, superhuman, or at least specifically exceptional powers or

qualities. These are such as are not accessible to the ordinary person, but are regarded as of divine origin or as exemplary, and on the basis of them the individual concerned is treated as a leader (Henerson and Parsons 1947:129).

The recurrence of words like "divine" and "supernatural" are due to the fact that Weber has borrowed the concept from "Rudolf Sohm, the Strassburg, church historian and jurist" (Gerth and Mills 1958:52). Charisma, then, is rooted in Christian legacy as well as it is in Weber's conception of the charismatic leader as a "continuation of a philosophy of history that, after Carlyle's Heroes and Hero Worship, influenced a great deal of nineteenth-century history writing" (Gerth and Mills 1958:53). This view advocated by C. Wright Mills and H. H. Gerth seems to be in agreement with the views of most of the social scientists who have tackled Weber's complex formulation.

But a leader is not charismatic only because he possesses a certain "vision" of the future, or because of an exceptional will and self-confidence. He is charismatic because he can transfer this vision and this confidence to his followers, and to consequently stir in them both "loyalty" to himself and a "belief" in his exceptional powers and qualities. "His charisma" according to Ann R. and Dorothy Willner, "resides in the perceptions of the

people he leads" (Willner and Willner 1965:79).

This emphasis on the leader-follower duality is essential to an understanding of the increasing tendency to view charismatic leadership as a socio-political pheonmenon by calling attention to the situation that prepares the soil for the emergence of the leader. The leader, according to this mode of analysis, cannot be separated from the circumstances that breed the charismatic situation. His emergence is integrally linked to a deeply felt need for an extraordinary response in times of despair and decline. The charismatic situation, in Weber's view, is one that is characterized by "psychic, physical, economic, ethical, religious and political distresses" (Gerth and Mills 1958:245).

The charismatic leader, presumably, recognizes the gravity of the situation and summons the people to follow him on the path of salvation and deliverance. What distinguishes the charismatic leader from other types of leadership is the ability to elicit strong and intense responses from a large segment of the population. Unlike ordinary leaders in ordinary times, he is able to touch and stir deep and sometimes violent reservoirs of passion and commitment among the population. This mission as defined by the leader "is accepted as a duty by a wide circle of his followers because of their belief in his extraordinary

qualities; their degree of commitment is higher than for any other form of authority" (Dow 1968:329).

The leader's charisma flows from his mastery of, and grip on, the people's dream that he constantly visualizes for those around him. His leadership position is only secured by his ability to convince his followers that his vision of the future will come to pass. This is a far cry from ordinary kinds of leadership if only by virtue of the all encompassing and supernatural views and claims the leader makes. Robert C. Tucker termed it "specifically salvationist or messianic in nature" (Tucker 1968:743).

This should also enable us to see another aspect of charismatic leadership: it is a rejectionist type of leadership. It is alien to the world of everyday routine; it calls for new ways of life and thought. Its ultimate goal is to rewrite the rules of the game and to redress the grievances of the leader's followers.

II -- Theoretical Criticism

The concept of charismatic leadership has lately been subjected to incisive and rigorous criticism from a number of social scientists who are troubled by either; a) the extent of the concept's applicability and relevance, or b) the lack of a detailed description of those specifically personal qualities of the leader that enable him to forge the unique and emotional relationship with his fol-

lowers that is so necessary for the emergence of the charismatic situation. It is essential to remember that one of Weber's central concerns was over the leader's ability to routinize his charisma. Routinization of charisma "is the process by which charisma is transformed from an extraordinary and purely personal relationship (between leader and followers) into an established authority structure that is no longer necessarily dependent upon personal charisma qualification in the incumbent leader" (Entelis 1974:452). Charismatic leadership is thus seen as a transitory process, that if successful, would lead to the depersonalization of the authority structure in society.

One of the most prominent critics of the concept has been K. J. Ratnam who has maintained that the concept "has not in any substantial way improved our understanding of the problems it touches on . . ." The emphasis on the leader's personality, he maintains, serves only to obscure the critical component of the leader-follower relationship. This is due to the fact that the leader "gets his support largely from issues he is associated with, the grievances he seeks to put right and the manner in which he proposes to do so, and the time he chooses for making these issues and grievances the passionate concern of those whom he thinks will be his followers" (Ratnam 1964:345).

Ratnam seems, thus, to reject a purely psychological or personality oriented explanation of the phenomenon.

Issues, he maintains, are more important in determining the success or failure of the charismatic leader. Others have questioned the concept on the basis of the appropriateness of its removal from the sphere of religion. Both Karl Lowenstein and Carl Friedrich seem to contend "that the world of religion remains the fundamental locus of charisma" (Lowenstein 1966:79). According to this view, charismatic leadership is essentially bound to a divine and transcendental dimension in which both the leader and his followers believe. Friedrich ties his criticism neatly to the questions of organization, power and leadership. The secular (charismatic!) leader, he claims, is immensely concerned about organization and power. A true charismatic leader (i.e. the founders of religion) is not. This is especially critical, he argues, since "charisma does not provide an adequate type of leadership, but only of power. Power is differentiated according to its source, leadership according to its function" (Friedrich 1961:3).

Others have criticized the concept on methodological as well as historical grounds. Typical of the methodological criticism is that of Claude Ake who questions the notion of magnetism or appeal of the leader:

> To establish the presence of this condition empirically calls for a specialized form of research which the proponents of the theory of charismatic legitimation have not undertaken. One must insist on operational indices for identifying and measuring the extent of charismatic appeal because the minimal requirement for the validation of the theory of charismatic

> legitimation in any historical instance is that the leader be perceived as endowed with charisma by enough people to make charisma a critical instrument of 'social mobilization'" (Ake 1966:6).

This analytical difficulty must be counted among the concept's greatest weaknesses. This can especially be seen when one considers that the wealth of literature on charismatic leadership is fundamentally counterbalanced by the dearth of operational research into the dynamic and analyzable "catalogue of the personal quality in charismatic leaders which give rise" to the charismatic situation. This is especially critical since many theorists, according to Ake, "assume without explication or empirical evidence that certain leaders of the new states possess charisma" (Ake 1966:5).

The final, and perhaps the most profound, criticism of the concept is one that centers around the relative lack of a long term sense of history in the theory. Neither Weber, nor the students of his thought have been able to anchor the theory into a larger historical framework. What sort of historical transitions and movements have paved the way for the emergence of this form of authority relationship? The question must be a central concern of every theoretical undertaking. Professor Peter Blau has noted this deficiency in Weber's concept in that it "encompasses only the historical processes that lead from charismatic movements to increasing rationalization and does not include an analysis of the historical conditions that give rise to

charismatic eruptions in the social structure" (Blau 1963: 128).

These by no means exhaust the long list of criticisms directed at the concept of charismatic leadership. Of all the concept's weaknesses, however, the role it assigns to the followers is potentially the most damaging. To cast the followers in a static and secondary role is not only a dubious proposition; it is an anachronism to this age in which the people have been, on many occasions, ahead of their leaders. Yet, the concept seems to continuously reappear in the writings of many a thoughtful social scientist. The question then becomes, why can we not discard the concept and look somewhere else for a better and more comprehensive explanatory tool?

III -- Developmental Ideology

The traditional answer to the question regarding the persistent use of the concept of charismatic leadership, despite its obvious deficiencies, is simple if not simplistic. According to this view, the concept is rather useful "in the context of a study of modernization and political development in ex-colonial 'new states'. Edward Shills, David Apter, and Dorothy and Ann Ruth Willner have all pointed its potential usefulness in this area" (Tucker 1968:734). In this sense, the charismatic leader's mission is to bridge the gap between the decayed past and the yet

undeveloped future and to provide some economic and social opportunities for his frustrated followers.* Edward Shills has, better than anyone else, articulated this strategy and need:

> The countries with underdeveloped economies are primarily peasant countries and their national unity is quite new and fragmentary. The uneducated classes are rooted mainly in local territorial and kinship groups; sometimes they are dependents of feudal magnates to whom are directed whatever wider loyalties they have. They do not have the strong sense of nationality which drives the leaders of their country, who are often the creators of the nation and not merely of the new states. These leaders are strong and creative persons who have broken away from the bonds of the old order -- the bonds of kin and family and local territory.

Even when they claim to speak in behalf of the deeper traditions of those whom they would lead, they have departed from the actual traditions of the culture in which they originated. They are 'nationalized' and 'political' and therein lies their chief novelty. The majority of the state, by contrast, lives in sometimes unthinking, sometimes obstinate, attachment to its traditional symbols. Most of its life is 'pre-national' and 'pre-political'" (Shills 1958: 2).

Shills' analysis and observations of both the new states and their leadership is essentially accurate,

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*In his book on Rebel Leadership, James Downtown attempted to prove the psychological benefits that an individual could attain through his attachment to a charismatic leader. Malcolm X who has previously suffered from identity diffusion has developed intellectually to a point where he was able to perceive even the deficiencies of his leader.

although differences of degree do exist among the various nations in terms of their national consciousness. Differences of degree did exist, for example, between the Sudan and Egypt at the time of their independence. Although neighboring countries and sharing in history, language, and traditions, the Sudan and Egypt were not similar in terms of the extent of politicization or national consciousness. However, his observation concerning the 'nationalization and politicization' of the leadership is extremely accurate. Almost all of the leaders who have been labeled charismatic have had some contact with Western political and intellectual thought. Nkrumah's and Sukarno's foreign studies (in England, the United States, and the Netherlands) and Ghandi's studies in law have opened their eyes to a world of possibilities that would have been unthinkable had they remained within the physical and intellectual confines of their own cultures.

The introduction of colonial institutions seems to undermine the authority of traditional leaderships. Thus the attainment of independence is usually accompanied by a political and institutional vacuum. Ann Ruth and Dorothy Willner have successfully described this process:

"The basis of traditional authority, however was eroded by Colonialism and indigenous nationalism and the basis of legal authority was undermined by indigenous nationalism." (Willner and Willner, 1965:80) The nation

has neither the authority of its traditional institutions nor the authority based on rules and bureaucratic directives. The Willners' description of this situation is instructive, "A climate of uncertainty and unpredictability is therefore a breeding ground for the emergence of charismatic leadership." (Willner and Willner, 1965:81)

The charismatic leader, at this juncture, has his task neatly cut for him. This consists of two things:

A -- He must lead the way toward the legitimation of the state. This is essentially "a matter of getting the citizen to regard it as a genuine representative of his interests and therefore deserving his loyalty; it is to some extent a matter of making him think of the state as 'we' rather than 'they'." (Ake, 1966:6) It is only natural for a citizen who has learned to regard the state as an instrument and a symbol of foreign domination to show some hesitation in accepting its changed status as his own. This is especially true since the charismatic leader has often been forced to depend on a bureaucracy inherited from the colonial period with colonial attitudes.

B -- The charismatic leader is to affect normative changes resulting in the total transformation

> of the state. This is the dimension we called developmental ideology. He is often aware of the developmental gap between his people and those of industrialized countries, and thus bases a great portion of his appeal on the promise of deliverance to the promised land.

It is obvious that the theory of charismatic leadership is strewn with deficiencies, both methodological and conceptual, but its relevance to studies of the new states of the third world is unquestionable. The "hardiness" wrote Martin Spencer, "suggests that behind the various usages of the expression lies a significant social reality." (Spencer, 1973:342) This social reality is political as well as economic, has its fundamental locus in the third world. That is the theory's last, but rich frontier. It is the oxygen tank that keeps Max Weber's greatest contribution afloat. And it is a largely untapped frontier. But only in the sense that the theory is a first step toward the understanding of the phenomenon of post-colonial leadership in these countries.

Professor R. H. Dekmejian has proposed a Developmental scheme, which he calls an historical-empirical type framework of general applicability, in which he attempts to delineate the general features of the charismatic progression. It is, we must remember, only a skeletal outline but it is one that attempts to incorporate the experience

of what he loosely terms third world charismatic leaderships. The scheme evolves along the following lines:

1 -- A situation of acute social crisis characterized by the pathological response of society to a breakdown of the existing mechanisms of conflict resolution. In such times irrational, schizophrenia-like disorientations occur creating a deep sense of psychological dependence and heightened expectations.

2 -- The appearance of an exemplary personage without whom the charismatic relationship will not begin. The initiation of the charismatic relationship depends on whether the leader's performance-message fits the crisis situation. Finally, the leader-follower interaction may be aborted if the leader is denied the opportunity to propogate and perform.

3 -- The leader can now proceed to effect a value transformation on the basis of the legitimacy flowing from the nascent charismatic relationship. Increasingly he exercises a diffuse and intense influence over the normative orientations of the masses. Thus, the leader fills the value-belief vacuum created by the social crises with his own belief system or ideology as promulgated in his message. Indeed the charismatic relationship is a two-way process from which both leader and followers receive fulfillment and satisfaction.

4 -- The final stage in the evolution of charismatic

authority is 'routinization'. The term denotes the leader's efforts to establish a new order based on the legitimacy derived from his charisma. The legitimacy popularly ascribed to these institutions flows not only from his heroic record and exemplary qualities, but more basically from the value transformation that he has caused to take place. (Dekmejian, 1971:4-9)

Shills, Willner and Dekmejian's attempt to view post-colonial leadership as charismatic raises some serious problems, however. Thus to say, as Shills did, that the leader's awareness of the need for development and the comparatively high degree of his "politicization" are sufficient to propel him into the charismatic sphere, is highly problematic. It is as though he was implying that one's degree of "Westernization" is equal to his charismatic potential. But more interesting, from a theoretical viewpoint, is Shills' awareness of the historical processes that dictate the elevation of certain individuals to leadership roles by virtue of their "novelty". It is not the leader's inner strength and heroic supernatural qualities that seem to be the determining factor of his charisma, but the demands of a certain historical and political situation. Similar criticism can be directed at Willner's conception of "a climate of uncertainty and unpredictability" as the breeding ground for this kind of leadership since it tends to see the nation's post colonial trauma as the critical prerequisite

for charismatic leadership.

Even Dekmejian's methodologically rigorous model is built around assumptions such as the breakdown of conflict resolution mechanisms and whether the leader is allowed or "denied the opportunity to propagate". Both assumptions seem to imply that a vacuum is created as a result of the removal of the colonial apparatus and the national upheaval accompanying it. In all of these prescriptions one is left with the impression that it is the demands of the situation and not the leader's qualities that are the more critical.

This tendency among a number of Western writers to view charisma as a useful tool for the explanation of leadership problems in most third world countries suffers from two main deficiencies:

A -- As a conceptual descendant of the romantic view of leadership conveyed by Carlyle and accompanying the rise of legendary European leaders such as Napoleon and Bismarck, it tends to locate the source of the leader's success "by reference to personality, will, or fate" and thus ignore the follower's interest and input into the process of mass mobilization. The image of the great leader battling the elements and emerging victorious against all odds is a dominant theme in Western literature since the days of Caeser and Alexander the Great.

But the world in which most third world leaders

found themselves is radically different, and the contributions of the Indonesian people, for example, precede the appearance of President Sukarno. The same is true of Egypt where the struggle for independence has flourished for at least 60 years prior to Nasser's appearance. Saad Zaghdool, the leader of the 1919 revolution, was a true hero to the Egyptian masses and many contemporary historians credit him with a magnetism and leadership ability superior to Nasser's. But the Egyptian people's frustration with their colonized status has reached the boiling point culminating only a few months before Nasser's revolution in fires and riots so violent that it was called "the Black Saturday". The harassment of British troops by patriotic groups, as well as the conviction within the Western world that the times of colonial expansion were doomed to an end, are among the factors that set the stage for the emergence of a strong native leadership.

Similar conditions -- with varying degrees of intensity -- prevailed in India, Ghana and a host of other countries. All over the third world, millions of people were sacrificing their lives in a massive yearning for independence and dignity. The search for leaders who can symbolize and articulate these dreams was an integral part of the struggle.

B -- The other flaw in this mode of analysis is the case with which it dismisses the leader's use of a variety

of communication channels ranging from the radio and the movie screen to the book and the speaker's microphone. The speed and the efficiency with which radio can spread the leader's speeches, or the capacity of the printing machine to turn out thousands of magazines and books designed to enhance his image have proven to be powerful weapons in the leader's attempt to mobilize the masses behind his programs and objectives. This process has, in turn, created a situation in which the people's perception of their leader is not necessarily reflective of his true qualities. More often they respond to well-manufactured images that surround them from the radio speeches, on the glittering movie screens and from the pages of well-written pamphlets and newspapers.

Dignity and independence are, usually, the two overriding themes of the post-colonial era, and the leader's image is often linked to both pursuits. Daniel Lerner, in the course of an extensive discussion of what he called Nasser's "Communication strategy" observed that "His (Nasser) success in propagating the symbols of Arab Nationalism seems beyond question. The most impressive unifying force among Egyptians and 'Neutralist' Arabs today is the personality of Nasser as reflected through Cairo's voice of the Arabs." (Lerner, 1958:216)

Can we, then, call this kind of leader charismatic in the same sense that Weber intended? One can readily see

the difference between the two types of leadership. For unlike Weber's charismatic leader, the post-colonial third world leader is many times thrust onto the national stage as a result of national unrest and upheaval. The disappearance of, or the struggle against the Colonial power is the vacuum that often sucks him into a leadership position. The emergence of a large number of leaders under such circumstances attests to the historical and situational contexts of this phenomenon.

Furthermore, the fact the leader's staying power and the reverence in which he is held are largely based upon his total monopoly over society's varied communication channels, is a further testimony to the vast difference between the two kinds of leadership. Thus to call this type of leadership charismatic is to ascribe to him qualities that are neither inherent nor necessary to his leadership position. He is mostly not the possessor of supernatural or transcendental qualities. He is the creature of his age and the national circumstances, rather than the hero and great visionary described by Weber.

It is because of this crucial difference that the charismatic leader is a concept alien to both our age and the historical forces that triggered the emergence of the contemporary third world leader. A more appropriate concept in describing this type of leader is to call him neo-charismatic. Implied in this term is a recognition of the

fact that the leader is linked to his followers by a substantially more intense relationship than other forms of leadership. A native leader who replaces the colonial administrator at the top is likely to be looked up to as one who incorporates within himself those ideals most desired by his people. Centuries of colonial occupation tend to cast clouds of doubt and feelings of inferiority into the masses psyche. An effective and capable leader can, through acts of postures of defiance, do miracles as far as the improvement of his people's self-image is concerned.

It would be virtually impossible to provide a neat and precise list of traits that characterize neo-charismatic leaders. Differences of milieu and of the context within which the national struggle was conducted to be taken into account. What shall be listed, instead, are four features that seem to be common to the emergence and evolution of most such leaders:

1 -- They tend to emerge in a situation of acute crisis and national distress. The leader need not be responsible for the initiation of the struggle, nor is he necessarily among the pioneering figures. Nasser's late-comer status within the Egyptian national movement is a good example.

2 -- The leader must be capable of projecting himself as an impassioned articulator of the dreams and aspirations of the people. He is thus able to touch and

appeal to his people's sense of pride and dignity. Essentially this is realized through coopting rival forces within the national movement and the creation of a structure of national consensus that revolves around the leader's policies and initiatives. The leader thus becomes the ultimate arbiter of broad objectives and nationally significant trends.

3 -- The leader is invariably supported by a viable power base such as a political party or a military organization on whose resources he is able to draw at critical junctures. The lone-ranger image created around many such leaders is a gross misrepresentation of what it takes to achieve total ascendancy.

4 -- Last, but not least, is the leader's eventual monopoly over communication channels in society as a direct result of his ascendancy to power. Many references have been made to the use most neo-charismatic leaders make of this monopoly, but it was rarely conceived as a critical element in the leader's arsenal. The intensity and effectiveness with which the neo-charismatic leader is able to communicate his ideas can be either hindered or enhanced by such factors as culture, language, ethnic diversity or the mere availability of the machinery and expertise necessary to provide a comprehensive coverage reaching all the major sections of society. This, then, is the leader's main weapon in the process of the engineering of national consensus. As

such it is also responsible for the "special" and "intense" relationship the leader has with his followers.

These features of neo-charismatic leadership by no means exhaust all of its characteristics. Rather, they are an attempt to capture those essential and universal features of the phenomenon in the tradition of Max Weber's concept of the ideal type. To state the matter thusly is to admit that the emphasis put on one element under a certain leader is not always equal to the emphasis applied to another leader.

The next two chapters will thus be devoted to a discussion of the manner in which these features apply to Nasser's brand of neo-charismatic leadership. It will be argued that his leadership has greatly rested on a thorough exercise of the power of mass persuasion through the manipulation of the various communication channels. To suggest that communication has played a critical part in Nasser's ascendancy is, of course, not to deny the power of a military base or the impact of a fearsome oppression system. It is merely intended to highlight the significance of an element rarely recognized in the analysis of neo-charismatic leadership.

CHAPTER III

Communication in a Charismatic Setting

The mystery surrounding the rise of charismatic leaders continues to baffle the social scientists. The sociological and the psychological arguments have so far been the most prominent explanations as the last chapter indicates. There is, of course, no doubt that deteriorating social conditions and the leader's inner strength and superior qualities are among the most crucial factors in our attempt to explain this phenomenon. Factors other than these two may yet be uncovered. Thus, the central thesis of the study attempts to add one more explanatory variable. Persuasive communication, in all its aspects and form, can provide part of the explanation for the rise of at least one charismatic leader. The phenomenal increase in the use of communication channels and methods in Egypt, under the direction of the late President Nasser, have been noted by many observers of the Egyptian scene. No one, however, has attempted to explain the degree to which this fact (i.e. the extensive use of communication channels) has contributed to Nasser's rise or his survival as the viable leader of his country.

All charismatic leaders have to some degree used the communication channels under their disposal, but the effect of this use is governed occasionally by factors over which the leader has very little control. Three such factors are:

A) The number of languages spoken by the population. Rare, indeed, are the situations in which the whole nation speaks the same language.

B) The number of communication channels available to the leader and the extent of their use. Thus if the nation happens to speak more than one language, and if further, the number of papers and radios are small, then it can be assumed that the leader is at some disadvantage.

C) Finally, there is the question of cultural and linguistic unity and diversity. The extent to which a leader can emotionally stir and mobilize the population is influenced by cultural symbols and myths. The overall cultural milieu and heritage is extremely important in this respect.

Having prefaced this part of the study with these observations we shall now begin the exploration of the nature, methods and channels of communication, especially persuasive communication. Persuasive communication, however, is mediated and influenced by the interplay of the national language and its cultural milieu. Both of these aspects will be discussed first in a universal framework and, then later on, in terms specific to the Arab culture and language.

I -- Of Communication and Persuasion

Very few concepts in the social sciences have been defined in as many ways as communication is. In an investigation of the Concept of Communication, Professor Frank E. X. Dance outlines 15 different definitions addressing fifteen different themes. Thus one definition stresses the theme of interaction while another addresses a verbal or a symbols theme. Another definition, yet, emphasizes the channel or the means of sending messages (Dance 1970:

204-208). There is, however, a wide agreement on at least two components to any definition that aspires to command the attention of a significant number of social scientists. Communication, it is argued, is a process. It occurs over time and through space. It is, in other words, continuous because it is essential to the maintenance of the species. Communication is also perceived as intentional. No one communicates without a purpose. Bernard Berelson stressed the processual component when he stated that "Communication: the transmission of information, ideas, emotions, skills, etc., by the use of symbols -- words, pictures, figures, graphs, etc. It is the act or process of transmission that is usually called communication" (Berelson 1964:254). Gerald A. Miller stressed the intentional theme "In the main, communication has as its central interest those behavioral situations in which a source transmits a message to a receiver (S) with conscious intent to affect the latter's behaviors" (Miller 1966:92). Seen from this perspective, the purpose of communication becomes change in attitudes and eventually change in behavior. This, then, is a process whose ultimate goal is to promote changes and adaptations in human behavior compatible with the demands and desires of both the sender and receiver. Wilbur Schramm emphasized this further when he wrote that "whenever change occurs in human society, there communication flows . . . . For it is important to remember that communication is not

something that has a life of its own; it is something people do. It is the fundamental process of society, the way that people relate to each other" (Schramm and Lerner 1967:6). Harold Lasswell's model of the communication process seems to be the basis for this view of communication. The model is summarized in a question form: Who says what to whom in what channel with what effect? (Smith 1966:541). This formulation is especially strong in that it asserts the role and credibility of the communicator; points out the significance of the message content; includes the receiver or audience; and finally inquires about the changes effected.

The search for the effect is an implicit recognition of one of communication's most fundamental goals which is persuasion. If adding knowledge and increasing awareness is one central goal of all communication acts, then persuasion is the other. Aristotle, indeed, defined the study of rhetoric (communication) as the search for "all the available means of persuasion" (Berlo 1960:7). The question thus becomes, what is persuasion? How does it differ -- and if it does -- from other aspects of communication? Part of the answer to this question lies in whether one perceives there to be a real difference between two concepts: Rhetoric and persuasion. To be sure, many believe that the two concepts are one and the same thing. Paul N. Campbell perceives no difference, "I've defined Rhetoric as the theory and practice of persuasion by reasoned discourse."

Facts, he claims "are persuasive; there is nothing cold, or remote, or unfeeling about them" (Campbell 1972:15-18). This view, extreme as it may sound, is by no means foreign to the confusion that prevails regarding these concepts.

The distinction is, nevertheless, drawn by the majority of social scientists. Bettinghaus responded to the view that all communication is persuasion by pointing out that "in order to be persuasive in nature, a communication situation must involve a conscious attempt by one individual to change the behavior of another individual or groups of individuals through the transmission of some message" (Bettinghaus 1967:13). Three examples involving communication and resulting in behavior changes were provided. These examples, he declared, were not persuasive because they lacked an intentional dimension. The differences between rhetoric and persuasion is a necessary one to observe according to Condon. He views rhetoric "as the speaker's conscious use of symbols, spoken and unspoken, to elicit from his intended or assumed audience the response he desires." Persuasion, on the other hand, involves "changing attitudes or beliefs, while rhetorically a speaker may seek only to reaffirm what is already delivered, demonstrate his legitimacy, or otherwise symbolically express what is expected of him" (Condon and Yousef 1975:232). Essential to this distinction is the view that rhetoric may elicit temporary and limited changes. These are changes

that are geared to the moment, but they are always within the secure boundaries of the status quo. Persuasion, on the other hand, is geared to more profound and subtle changes. The goal seems to be a radical re-arrangement of the audience's social reality.

Another view of the relationship between persuasion and rhetoric, and one that seems to be concerned with the subject matter more than it is with the effect, is the one advanced by Donald C. Bryant. "Rhetoric," he maintains, "is the rationale of informative and sensory discourse. All its other meanings are partial or morally colored derivatives from that primary meaning. . ." (Aly and Aly 1973:70). Rhetoric, thus viewed, is somewhat similar to a bird: one wing is suasory, persuasive and the other is informative and expository.

Of the two wings we are essentially concerned with one, not to the total exclusion of the other, but in as much as it has been used by charismatic leaders in their effort to promote their integrative mission on the "road to modernity." It is plainly difficult to say how important persuasive communication has been to the charismatic leader. The difficulty lies, of course, in the fact that communication is only one variable among many that ought to be considered in any rational discussion of the variables that go into the discussion of contemporary political leadership in third world countries. But the temptation and

the evidence are irresistable. The survival of Nasser's charismatic leadership, if only till his death, when contrasted with the disappearance of charismatics such as Ahmed Sukarno of Indonesia or Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana must in part be attributed to this effective, if not always correct, use of the various means of persuasive communication at his disposal.

What, then, are the factors that one must consider in an attempt to understand persuasive communication? These factors can be depicted at two different levels. First, one must in some manner address the cultural dimension. The emphasis in our case is on the interplay between a cultural rhetorical tradition and the known features of its langauge(s). Fortunately our theatre of interest has only one language: namely Arabic. Secondly, sufficient attention must also be paid to the broad category of the means and vehicles of persuasive communication. We are here concerned with those criteria contributing to the success of the individual communicator on the one hand, and those channels used by the charismatic communicator in propagating his message.

II -- "The" Language and Its Culture

Our view of language and the functions it serves has gone through some drastic revisions in the last half century. Previously, language has been treated as a kind

of neutral medium through which ideas and thoughts were expressed. Linguist Edward Sapir and his student Benjamin Whorf had a different view, a radical view to be correct.

Language, they maintained:

> "is not merely a more or less systematic inventory of the various items of experience which seem relevant to the individual, as is so often naively assumed, but is also a self-contained, creative symbolic organization, which not only refers to experience largely acquired without its help but actually defines experience for us by reason of its formal completeness and because of our conscious projection of its implicit expectations into the field of experience" (Condon and Fathi 1975:171).

Language, as they see it, is not only a carrier of ideas and thoughts, it helps shape them. Reality as we see it transmitted by language, becomes colored by language and immensely influenced by it. Man's thought processes are also directly influenced by the medium of their articulation. Lev. S. Vygotsky gave prompt expression to this mode of analysis when he asserted that "Thought and language which reflect reality in a way different from that of perception, are the key to the nature of human consciousness. Words play a central part not only in the development of thought but in the whole historical growth of consciousness as a whole. A word is a microcosm of human consciousness" (Vygotsky 1962:168).

But if the language is so central to man's thought processes and to his consciousness, then it can be argued that language is even more critical to nationalist ideologies.

For as we contemplate the process of decolonization in many a third world country, we are bound to observe the vacuum it leaves behind. Part of the vacuum has unfortunately been related to the lack of cohesion in most of these countries due to many factors; economic, political, social and cultural. Cultural cohesiveness and political integration are immensely hampered by the lack of a common medium of expression. One of history's most brilliant students, Arnold Toynbee, is impressed by the relationship language has to nationalism. He remarked that " . . . the criterion of nationality has often been found in the shibboleth of language" (Toynbee 1935:536). This fact underlies much of the emphasis in many third world countries on the language question. Much of Africa, for example, is either adopting or arguing for the adoption of Swahili as the national language.

Belief in the nation, in its viability and in the strength of its fabric, is language-dependent. Daniel Katz articulated the social underpinnings of this argument when he insisted that masses are tied into national integration "through their emotional investment in system symbols" (Fishman 1972:54). Nationalism attempts to strengthen those bonds and build those bridges that tie the past to the present, and hopefully provide a vision of or a goal for the future. In this cementing process, language plays a most vital role. Seen from this historical and dynamic

perspective, nationalism "needs group symbols that are more evocative of the past then unyieldingly anchored (or anchoring) to it; more indicative of uniqueness than disablingly mesmerized by it" (Fishman 1972:55). The close and intimate identity between a people and its language may have an influence on the modal personality of that people. Nowhere has this argument been so compellingly argued as it has been in the relationship of Arabic to the Arab people. In his revealing book on The Ideas of Arab Nationalism, H. Z. Nuseibeh, contends that "the role of Arabic in the life history of the Arabs . . . is [to be] the register of their creativeness, a symbol of their unity, and an expression of their mental and artistic aptitudes" (Nuseibeh 1956:69). Arabic has the further characteristic of being woven into the religious fabric of Islam. The affinity between the religion and the language is so profound for "religion was as much the conveyor of the language as the language was the conveyor of the religion" (Fishman 1972:142). France's most vigorous effort to cut the umbilical cord that tied Algeria to the rest of the Arab world was mainly centered on replacing the Arab culture by the French, especially in attempting to make French the only spoken and written language in the country. It was only in the religious schools where the Holy Koran was taught that Arabic was spoken, and Algeria's drive to "authenticize her culture and personality is concentrated in the area of bringing Arabic back to its previous

prominence" (Fishman 1968:137-139).

Arabic has been somewhat hampered by the divergence between the classical form and the colloquial forms used in contemporary Arab countries. Classical Arabic has been accused of being time-bound and rather inflexible in the face of a new age almost completely immersed in the demands of a technological culture. Professor Jacques Berque, one of the West's most leading authorities on Arab culture, noted this difficulty and strongly hinted at the emerging linguistic solution.

"Through the press, the radio, and the ever more frequent contacts between Arabs of different speech, the so-called 'modern' Arabic language has come into being: what I call Median Arabic, arabiya wusta, mediating between nations, and between letters and life" (Berque 1964:202).

The influence language exerts on the cognitive field of the individual has been noted not only by Whorf and Sapir. Others such as McCluhan and Innis have further stressed and emphasized this aspect. The strong tendency in the Arabic language to shape and mold its subject's view of the world has been the stimulus to a vigorous controversy. In one of the earlier attempts to apply the analytical tools of social psychological explanation to this area, E. Shouby stated that Arabic induces in the Arab personality "general vagueness of thought; overemphasis on the psychological significance of the linguistic symbols at the expense of their

meanings; stereotyped emotional responses; over-assertion and exaggeration; and two levels of life" (Shouby 1951:291). Berger, Gibb and Patai share this point of view with varying degrees of emphasis. The Words vs. Action dichotomy is especially pronounced in Ralph Patai's appraisal of the power Arabic exercises over the individual's mind. "No language I know" he contends "comes even near to Arabic in its power of rhetoricism, in its ability to penetrate beneath and beyond intellectual comprehension directly to the emotions and make its impact upon them . . . . Once the intention of doing something is verbalized, this verbal formulation itself leaves in the mind of the speaker the impression that he has done something about the issue on hand, which in turn psychologically reduces the importance of following it up by actually translating the stated intention into action" (Patai 1973:48). The implications of such an argument, especially when pushed to their logical conclusion, is that the Arabs are incapable of action. This, of course, is contradictory to the historical record. But the tendency among powerless peoples to substitute words for actions is undeniable, and the colorful nature of Arabic can only reinforce such a tendency.

E. T. Prothro, a longtime resident-observer of Arab culture and psychology, sees the question in terms that are far less evaluative and dramatic. Using Osgood's "semantic differential" technique for the study of language

and cognition, two groups of Arab students (The American University of Beirut) were "sorted on an 11-point scale of favorableness-unfavorableness, general statements which might be taken as descriptive of any group of people. The judgements of the Arab students were then compared with the previously known judgements of American students (The Grice-Remmers generalized attitude scale)." At the end of his study, Prothro reaches the conclusion that "It seems justified to infer from our results that . . . American students are more given to understatement than are Arab students" (Prothro 1955:9).

This tendency toward repetition and emphasis is especially pronounced in public speech. In his nationalization of the Suez Canal Company speech, President Nasser insisted that "We must always be cautious of the tricks of exploiters, imperialists and the stooges of imperialists .... We shall not permit the war-mongers, the imperialists and slave-traders to have a grip upon us," etc. (Prosser 1973: 93). In comparing that speech to Prime Minister Anthony Eden's speech in response, Dr. M. Suleiman found that Nasser's contained 74 instances of assertive or exaggerative words to Eden's 49. In repetition Nasser scored 25 to Eden's 0 (Prosser 1973:93).

It is worthwhile, however, to remember that both the Shouby observations and the Prothro study were conducted either in the late 1940's or in the early 1950's. Awareness of these tendencies and serious remedial attempts have

resulted from the efforts of Arab intellectuals especially in the last 15 years. But the change, affecting both the tone and the content, has not diminished in any drastic way the political and emotional significance of the language. For as Dr. H. Sharabi observes "in the political life, Arabic is a most effective instrument of influence and persuasion" (Sharabi 1966:93). This effectiveness Dr. Sharabi speaks of is further enhanced by the fact that Arabic is spoken by more than 100 million people spread over nearly 20 countries. An ambitious political leader, in this case Nasser, is able through expert use of the various instruments of persuasive communication to spread his influence far beyond the borders of his country. Of particular relevance, then, is an attempt to explore and point out the various channels and methods used in this process of persuasive communication.

III -- Persuasion: Instruments and Strategies

A significant part of Daniel Lerner's widely read book, The Passing of Traditional Society, is partly devoted to an inquiry into the impact of mass communication on the developmental patterns in the Middle East. Lerner contends that the prevailing communication system is a combination of Oral and Mass Media. This apparently is suited to a transitional society in which the individual acquires a "different latent structure of aptitudes and attitudes . . ." (Lerner 1958:72). The transitional individual sees a

different, less restrictive, more participant oriented world than his traditional peer does. David Riesman adds a more immediate dimension to the concept, for the "Transitional" he maintains, "is defined as one who attends to the mass media, but cannot read" (Lerner 1958:72). This oral/media combination calls for the intensive application of certain channels and methods of communication. The fact that certain means are used more intensively does not, however, suggest the total exclusion of others.

To a large extent our choice of channels to be included in a study of this nature must be determined by what we understand channel to be. David K. Berlo defined channel simply as "a medium, a carrier of messages" (Berlo 1960:31). The message-centered meaning of a channel allows us to explore the large variety of channels used by the charismatic leader in a manner more suitable to, and reflective of, prevailing social conditions. Most third world countries, especially ones that are culturally and physically capable of it, employ a multiple channel strategy. E. Lloyd Sommerland saw the need for this method. "In a developing country, press, radio, television and film are more complimentary than competitive. One may be more effective when used in conjunction, the one reinforcing the other. Hence, in the great campaigns undertaken by a government . . . the greatest impact will be achieved and the fastest progress made if all available methods of

communication are used concurrently" (Sommerland 1966:66). This is all the more true since communication environment is rigidly controlled in most of these countries. But the predominant form of communication in developing countries is still "by word of mouth." Opinion leaders are extremely crucial to this process even in industrialized countries. As Lazarsfeld and Berelson have discovered "ideas often flow from radio and print to the opinion leaders and from them to the less active sections of the population" (Prosser 1973:122). This formulation, commonly known as the Two-Step Flow Theory, is remarkable in its recognition of the fact that people are not as easily swayed and manipulated as was previously assumed. Elihu Katz identified its central premise in that it "stressed the functioning of interpersonal relations as communication networks and as sources of social pressure or support" (Prosser 1973:123). The centrality of the opinion leader to the communication process in what Lerner called Oral/Media societies lies at the heart of his previously mentioned work.

These two channels, media and opinion leaders, do not exhaust the leader's communication arsenal. It is with such a broad view of the process that we shall presently pursue a more comprehensive survey of the means and channels opened to the charismatic leader in a manner commensurate with their vitality to the communication process.

1 -- Oral Communicators: The significance of this

group cannot be overemphasized especially in view of the fact that the Arabs have always exhibited an outward orientation to their existence. M. Berger in his famous book, The Arab World Today, stated this thesis. "Throughout their history, despite the recent introduction of Western political forms, Arab communities have been collections of groups rather than of individuals. The family and the tribe have been the social units through which the individual has related himself to others . . ." (Berger 1962:33). Cafes, public gatherings, religious affairs and Bazaars are the central focus of village life. The story teller, the Friday sermon, the rumor, as well as the respected member of the community are only a few among the oral sources and interpreters of communication in such a setting.

These local activists are at the hub of the communication network and determine, though not often collectively, the kinds of information and messages filtered to the population. Ithiel De Sola Pool summed up the process, "It has been fairly well established in a variety of cultures that whereas the mass media serve effectively to diffuse information without confirming their impulse by checking with an opinion leader with whom they are in face-to-face contact" (De Sola Pool:94). As in the other forms of communication discussed here, the extent to which this form has been used to the leader's advantage will be spelled out in the case study contained in the next chapter. Suffice it to say here, that no comprehensive understanding

of the communication dynamics in the Middle East is complete without a full appreciation of this dimension.

2 -- The Mass Media: The Arab Society with its extrovert and outward orientation has been a fairly easy conquering ground for the mass media. Berger remarked that "The media of communication and their use have grown out of proportion to the population increase" (Berger 1962:399). In this area, radio has been the dominant and most used form of the mass media. This is largely due to the fact that radio is "well adapted" to the circumstances of a poor country (Goldthorpe 1975·208). Illiteracy has been the main obstacle facing the press, but radio suffers none from this difficulty. As Nasser explained it: "It is true that most of our people are still illiterate. But politically that counts far less than it did 20 years ago . . . . Radio has changed everything" (Adams 1971:587). Radio, then, is an instrument of communication whose utility is undiminished for illiterate societies. The UNESCO statistics are most instructive in this regard. Their 1968 "World Radio and Television" lists Egypt as having 4,260,000 radio receivers. By comparison, South Korea and Turkey had 1,400,000 and 2,803,000. The figures are interesting, especially when we realize that both Turkey and South Korea have a higher rate of literacy and a higher per capita income (UNESCO 1968).

In Egypt, newspaper circulation "is now a quarter more to over double what it was a few years ago" according to

Berger (Berger 1962:399). Television, book production and cinema have also increased both in volume and circulation. This has resulted in a new and volatile situation in which politics are "beginning to replace traditional rites, at least in the Egyptian village . . ." in the words of Berque (Berque 1964:15-16). Lerner saw mass communication media as the instrument used to "arrive at consensus" without the active participation of the people.

3 -- The Leader's Rhetorical Skill: Public speaking is a revered art in the Middle East. Its roots are deeply dug in Arab history and tradition. Arab speech relies rather heavily on gesture and on hidden meaning which is "conveyed rather than directly or precisely expressed, and is always couched in terminology that evokes emotional rather than rational responses" (Sharabi 1966:93). Myth and symbols play a large part in this form of communication. Gesture, vigorous and well-timed, is essential and widely used. But effective use of the language is the ultimate criteria upon which a good speaker is judged. In all of these aspects, public speech is culturally determined. Commenting on President J. Nyrere's speech style, John C. Condon relays the following, "Nyrere would begin by chuckling; the audience would chuckle back. Soon a laughing relationship would be established, a form of rapport quite unlike anything observed in Western speech making . . . . He does voices -- farmers, women, whatever; he jokes, he

gets angry, he teases, but he maintains his dignity and the line of argument is tight" (Condon and Fathi 1975:236).

4 -- The Educational System and Idea Dissemination: New textbooks carrying the leader's message are introduced at all levels of education, and ones in disagreement are disposed of. New subjects are introduced concentrating mainly on propagating the leader's message and world view. Excerpts from the leader's speeches as well as readings stressing the nation's glorious past and the changes brought about by the leader are part of a program of "national education."

Wherever the citizenry may turn for information, entertainment, work, education or mere face-to-face encounters it is invariably surrounded by a communication system designed for mass persuasion. Richard R. Fagen in a book entitled Politics and Communication, stated that: "Every conceivable channel in the society is at the service of the elite in this effort. The mass media, the schools, the labor unions are all used to blanket the countryside with approved information and exhaustion . . . .

All the human and technological apparatus controlled by the leadership is designed to achieve maximum public coverage and effectiveness. The effort is continuous, homogeneous, and pervasive" (Fagen 1966:32-33).

CHAPTER IV

The Formative Years

Gamal Abdel Nasser was born at Alexandria on January 15, 1918, the eldest son of a post office worker from Beni Mor. Beni Mor bears the name of the village and the Arab tribe that inhabits it. In Arabic, Beni Mor means "the bitter ones," as Robert St. John points out in the opening chapter of his book, The Boss (St. John 1960:4).

The Egypt in which Nasser was born was anything but a happy place. Ruled by the Mohammed Ali dynasty, it was completely expropriated as a British protectorate in 1914. Prior to that it was always ruled by foreign powers: Persians, Greeks, Romans, Byzantines, Kurdish, Turkish, French and now the British. Nor was the dynasty of Mohammed Ali to claim any Egyptian ancestry, for they were of Albanian background.

Since their occupation of Alexandria in 1882, the British according to Anthy Nutting "refrained from initiating any programme of long-term development except where Britain's strategic interests were involved. Consequently, education of agrarian reform were neglected: learning and land ownership remained the privilege of the predominantly Turkish upper classes" (Nutting 72:5).

Political unrest and social fragmentation were the most visible signs of popular discontent. Ironically,

this was also a period of rising expectations: an Egyptian elite trained in French and Egyptian universities was making noises about independence and national dignity. More than one political party pretending to represent this sentiment were formed. Of these parties, however, only "Alwafd" was able to make a significant national impact. The leader of the Alwafd party, Saad Zaghloul, was also the leader of the 1919 revolution that articulated and carried further than any other movement Egypt's desire for independence. Professor Lacouture called Zaghloul the "father of the people" (Lacouture 1973:14) and his party, Alwafd, was the first to gain "a decisive victory in the elections which followed in 1924" (Nutting 1972:9).

However, the death of Saad Zaghloul in 1927 removed from the political stage the one man capable of providing all the people with a leader around whom to unify.

Dissatisfaction with traditional political parties and their seeming inability to accomplish the national goals and dreams gave birth to a plethora of highly motivated and tightly organized movements. Most famous among these movements is the Moslem Brotherhood which sought "in the name of Islam that Egypt and the Nile Valley be purified of all foreign occupation" (Nutting 1972:11). The Brotherhood appealed to the religious sentiments of the people, and was able to gather around it the alienated and the dissatisfied segments of the society. Convinced that traditional political approaches were fruitless, the Brotherhood

engaged in violent attacks against British bases and other symbols of foreign occupation. This has apparently exacerbated the atmosphere of popular unrest and carried the struggle against the British to a new pinnacle.

Nasser -- still a high school student -- felt the weight and the danger of this situation and wrote to a friend in 1935, "Today the situation is critical and Egypt is in an impasse. It seems to me that the country is dying. Despair is great. Who can end it?" (Stephens 1971: 34). Student demonstrations became a daily occurrence, but as was the case with party and militant organizations: they produced little effect. It was this realization that guided the decisions of many a young man to look for the army as an instrument of national salvation. The army's decision to lower the gates of admission policy to the military academy, and the process of revitalization of the armed forces announced by the government -- with Britain's acquiescence -- provided Nasser and his colleagues with the opportunity to fulfill their ambition.

Upon his admission to the academy Nasser met other cadets who shared his convictions. The circle of the dissatisfied grew larger, and the faint features of a revolutionary organization called "The Free Officers" became visible (Lacouture 1973:57). Next came the Palestinian war of 1948. The humiliation heaped on the Arab armies due to ineffective leadership, bad and useless arms

triggered among these young officers feelings of profound resentment. Anwar Sadat, Egypt's contemporary leader, recounted rather eloquently this experience, "The humiliation, frustration and anger aroused by the incompetence of the men who had led Egypt to defeat instead of victory, provoked a passionate desire to overthrow a regime which had once again demonstrated its complete impotence" (Sadat 1957:109).

The strains of a defeated army, corrupt bureaucracy, foreign occupation and intolerable social conditions grew worse. Rioting and other mainifestations of dissatisfaction became more intense until Cairo was literally burned on what became known as the Black Saturday of January 26, 1952. "The chosen targets," according to R. Stephens, "symbolized the hated alliance of pashas and foreigners . . . 700 or more buildings burnt down, smashed or looted, as the crowds raged through the streets unchecked" (Stephens 1972:101). From then on things took their worst turn as King Farouk kept appointing and dismissing one prime minister after the other. Nasser and his young cohorts saw the writing on the wall, and they struck promptly and swiftly on the 23rd of July 1952. Soon after that, serious problems began to confront the young officers.

Lacking recognition and legitimacy within the general population, they enlisted the help of a man known for his integrity and professionalism both within the armed

forces and on a national level. Thus General Mohammed Naguib was introduced as the Revolutionary Command Council's leader and eventually the president of the republic. Apparently, Nasser intended the General's role to be that of a titular figure. But the people seemed to have developed a genuine affection for the amiable and confident general. And he, in turn, saw their affection as an indication of confidence and a mandate to rule since he has the experience lacking in the young officers. A long and protracted struggle for power ensued. Nasser, jealous of the general's popularity and fearful of its consequences, began his first series of maneuvers to eliminate the man he intended to be only a "figurehead."

The struggle against the beloved General was vastly different from the conspiracy against a universally disliked government. Professor Jean Lacouture outlined the obstacles Nasser now faced:

> "In the beginning he had almost everything against him: the people, who were in love with Naguib, the majority of the army, which had rallied behind the general; the foreign embassies, who were banking on the smiling general . . .; all the political parties, from the Wafd to the Brethern (Muslim) and the Communists; and finally the propertied class" (Lacouture 1973:134).

The first episode of this conflict became known as a result of the orders Nasser gave to stop the activities of the Moslem Brotherhood. But the Brotherhood was far too powerful and organized to acquiesce. General Naguib's sympathetic attitude toward the Brotherhood's plight as well as

his insistence on the restoration of democratic institutions brought about his first offer of resignation. The news of the resignation triggered large "demonstrations in favor of the general staged by Cairo University students (and other national groups) who protested against army rule and called for elections and a constitutional democracy" (Nutting 1972:61).

Nasser and those of his colleagues who may have only been happy to get rid of the general, became aware as a result of the national uprise on his behalf that they have made a grave mistake. In Nutting's words, "For a moment, therefore, there was nothing that Nasser could do except concede victory to Naguib" (Nutting 1972:61). The general returned to the presidency riding a wave of unprecedented popularity. However, at the same moment that Nasser was all but conceding defeat, alternative plans and new maneuvers to oust the general were already underway. Naguib was obviously the victor "yet one by one the men who had helped him win were now going to be punished" (St. John 1960:170). Many of those who demonstrated on the general's behalf were being quietly rounded up while he was on a visit to the Sudan.

This was the tip of the iceberg. Underneath it, however, Nasser was putting the last touches on a complicated, but devious series of actions designed to undermine the general once and for all. To begin with, the two most

"symbolic" positions of president and prime minister were handed to the general. As such he was put in the awkward position of ultimate responsibility. Upon assuming the mantle of power in 1952, the army had promised the Egyptian people concrete reforms in the political system designed to rid it of its corrupt leaderships and practices. Since Naguib has become identified in the popular mind with the defense of democratic practices and institutions, Nasser proceeded to turn the general's advantage into his disaster. Thus on March 22, 1954, the Revolutionary Command Council (RCC) under Nasser's instigation "adopted a resolution promising an end to military rule by July 24, restoration of political parties, and free elections for a constituent assembly to elect a president" (Dekmejian 1971:30). To the man in the street this meant a return to conditions they were hoping to be reformed, accompanied by the reappearance of corrupt politicians. It also meant that this is the will and desire of General Naguib since he is the head of the RCC and the government as well as the dissolution of the Council.

This action -- the end of the revolution -- was one of Nasser's boldest maneuvers and one that provides a definite clue to his conspiratorial mind. For as these actions were announced, Nasser's men were convincing the labor unions as well as the army that the execution of these measures desired by the General spelled the end of their

dreams for reform. Lacouture described the results. "Instigated from above, a general strike was declared. The entire city, consumed with passion and infiltrated with paid provocateurs, whirled about in near-madness. Columns of demonstrators waved Nasserist banners eulogizing the Council of the Revolution, while other protestors shouted, 'Down with the basic freedoms!'"(Lacouture 1973:137). This also marked the first time that Nasser resorted to the use of communication channels as tools in his political struggles. This consisted of planting rumors at all national levels; speeches and press conferences by his colleagues such as the minister of "national guidance"; and finally the publication of reports concerning "telephone conversations between Naguib and Nahas, which suggested that the General was actively promoting the Wafd's return to power" (Nutting 1972:65). Having collaborated in the publication of these taped conversations, the newspapers were not aware that this was the first step in their eventual exploitation in Nasser's extensive campaigns of popular persuasion.

Nasser thus won the decisive round, but the final touches on this drama took place in Alexandria on October 26, 1954. While he was delivering a speech six shots were fired at him from a range of a few feet. Every bullet missed its mark and he shouted "Remember that if anything should happen to me, the Revolution will go on, for each of you is a Gamal Abdul Nasser" (Stephens 1972:136). That

the bullets missed Nasser despite their close range and Nasser's apparent lack of shock when coupled with the fact that the would-be assassin was accused of having connections with both the General and the Moslem Brotherhood raises serious questions about the incident's authenticity. It is the perfect crime in terms of achieving Nasser's goals, and several people raised the possibility that he may indeed have some knowledge -- if not the planning -- of its origin. That this approach is Machiavellian is confirmed by none other than Nasser who wrote that "Political action is not undertaken by angels but by human beings" (Dekmejian 1971: XVIII).

Baghdad, Bandung and Legitimacy

The fact that Nasser has finally won the battle against the General did not spell the end of his troubles. For in practical terms, and as far as the man in the street is concerned, Naguib represented the respectability and confidence that translated into legitimacy. Nasser and his colleagues were still somewhat of an enigma in the eyes of the broad masses. This fact was quickly grasped by Dekmejian "If anything, the crisis in legitimacy loomed greater than ever after Naguib's overthrow" (Dekmejian 1971:38). This search for legitimacy was quickly directed to issues outside Egypt's immediate borders. For as early as the latter two months 1954 Nasser launched a massive

campaign of public speeches, press attacks and radio programs against the signing by the Iraqi government of what became known as the Baghdad Pact. The Pact is a defense treaty "proposing that Iraq should renew her defense relationship with Britain within a Middle East Alliance (of pro-Western governments) . . ." (Nutting 1972:76).

Both the Arab governments and Arab masses appeared to have responded favorably to Nasser's vehement opposition to a pact that didn't seem to have their best interests at heart. Eventually the success of his campaign and initiative in inter-Arab affairs must have given him the exposure that is a pre-requisite for legitimacy. Nevertheless Nasser's image at that period was best described by Malcolm Kerr as "secretive, brooding, nervous, uncommunicative, ill at ease in public . . ." (Kerr 1969:9). It took another adventure abroad to bring him a fair amount of the legitimacy he much needed. The convening of the Bandung Conference, April 1955, marked the first time in history in which the leaders of thirty newly independent African and Asian states gathered to discuss matters of mutual interest to them. Suddenly Nasser found himself rubbing shoulders with such leaders as Chou En-Lai, Sukarno, and Nehru. Nasser's diligent performance during the conference won him the praise and a measure of esteem from the older and more experienced leaders. But, maybe

more important, was Bandung's meaning in the eyes of the Egyptian people. Of this particularly significant aspect Professor Lacouture writes, "At the end of April 1955, Nasser suddenly emerged as the nation's acknowledged leader. He was governing Egypt and uniting her people . . . .

Before 1955 his relation to the people was totally different from what it was the day he entered Cairo, April 22, his portrait flanked by those of Nehru and Chou En-Lai, his jeep carried along by the mob to indicate the significance of the event: identification has taken place" (Lacouture 1970:108).

Nasser's newly found rapprochment with the Egyptian people as well as his widening circle of contacts on the international scene -- ranging from Chou En-Lai and Tito to K. Roosevelt of the CIA -- seem to have opened his eyes to new possibilities. Egypt was no longer the sole theater of operations. His appetite for power and glory looked beyond Egypt to the whole Arab World and as he wrote in the Philosophy of Revolution, "The pages of history are also full of heroic roles and glorious roles which never found "heroes" to perform them. For some reason it seems to me that within the Arab circle there is a role . . . beckoning for us to move, to take up its lines, to put on its costume, since no one else is qualified to play it" (Nasser 1955:88).

The Suez Confrontation

Having consolidated his position at home, and established a reputation for being able to mix with other international leaders, Nasser now turned his attention to improvements that were sorely needed in Egypt. A land reform program was initiated earlier, limiting the number of acres that an individual is allowed to own to 200. To the millions of impoverished farmers this was a step in the right direction, but only a step. But in order to feed more people, more cultivable land was needed. Thus in the first decade of this century, a dam was built at Aswan increasing the area of cultivation. When the dam was first built there were about 12 million mouths to feed; but by 1955 the population was 23 million and rising at a net rate of one thousand in every twenty-four hours.

The solution to this dilemma seemed to reside in the building of a huge and expensive dam that would also conserve the waters of the life-giving flood so that it would provide perennial irrigation. The project was to cost $1 billion, $400 million of which would be in foreign exchange. The World Bank would lend Egypt $200 million and the U.S. (and Great Britain) would contribute the other $200 million between them. But Nasser's independent policy, especially recognition of Peking and the buying of arms from the Russians, did not set well with the U.S. Secretary of

State John F. Dulles. Genuinely perturbed by Nasser's moves, Secretary Dulles withdrew his previous offer claiming that Egypt's economy was too weak to justify such a loan.

Strained for an alternative source of foreign exchange, Nasser reasoned that by nationalizing the Suez Canal Company he would have enough hard currency to build the Aswan Dam. Nationalization of the company won the approval of the Arab World as well as that of most third world countries since as Nasser put it, "Egypt became the property of the canal, and the Canal Company became a state within a state." (Nutting 1972:145). This act of defiance, coming as it did in a fiery nationalistic speech, infuriated the Western countries and resulted in the coordinated invasion of Egypt by Britain, France and Israel. The failure of the Tripartite invasion is the result of many factors that coalesced in Egypt's favor. To begin with, both major powers were opposed to it. Third world countries also saw Egypt's struggle to be legitimate, and Arab governments solidly supported Egypt. In his determination to fight back, Nasser was in tune with the Egyptian people's mood of defiance.

Egypt's success in frustrating the invading forces and eventually bringing about their withdrawal was depicted as a major political and military victory. Nasser's role in this crisis was excessively exaggerated. The radio, the papers, books and songs were all employed in a campaign designed to glorify him throughout the Arab world.

The Road to the Six-day War

The image Nasser acquired throughout the Arab World, as a result of his communicational blitz, was one of a leader both determined and capable. It is a result of this conviction that the Syrian leadership sought unity with Egypt under his leadership. Syria, at the time, was a country plagued with internal strife and a fierce competition among the various political factions. Thus "faced with the threat of political chaos, a group of young Syrian officers decided early in 1958 to force the issue by putting to Nasser a request for an immediate union with Egypt." (Nutting 1972:212). As soon as the merger was declared, problems began to surface. Incapable of sharing leadership, Nasser soon fell out with many of those who were his enthusiastic followers. By pushing a socialist program, he also alienated the powerful merchant groups. The reasons are many and varied, but in three years the union was dissolved and Nasser's prestige in the Arab World became the prime victim.

Neither did Nasser's involvement in the Yemen bring him any reward. Egypt's interference on behalf of the republican side was extremely costly both in terms of human life and basic material. Hundreds of soldiers were killed in that remote and wretched war, and Nasser was never able fully and satisfactorily explain it to the Egyptian people.

Yemen thus became "Egypt's Vietnam". (Dekmejian 1971:306). Nasser's career has, until now, been through many ups and downs and he was almost always able to bounce back. But the combination of these two setbacks was extremely costly in prestige both inside Egypt, and throughout the Arab World. Nasser, as a result, developed a seige mentality and became less accessible to those who sought to meet with him. Nutting's diagnosis is especially pertinent, "Thus wrapped in a protective cocoon of yes-men, Nasser became increasingly intolerant of criticism and ever more inclined to hear only what he wanted to hear." (Nutting 1972:307). To a leader who premised his existence on representing the Arab people in general and on promises of great accomplishments, this did not bode well indeed.

The Six-day War

As a result of these and other less known setbacks, Nasser became more and more isolated as he has alienated most Arab governments. He was accused, with some justification, of being militant toward Israel only on the radio. Why has Egypt's borders been so quiet for so long when other Arab countries' borders with Israel are not? Did he intend, they asked, to redress the grievances of the Palestinians through rhetorical attacks on other Arab governments, or was he preparing for the "battle of destiny" against the Israeli enemy? Suddenly Nasser was trapped by his own militant

rhetoric. Israel's attack on a Jordanian village and on the Syrian Air Force in early 1967 brought intolerable pressures for action. Arab dignity was at stake and Egypt must be in the forefront of its defenders.

Egypt's defeat in the Six-day War seemed to be a logical conclusion to the fragmentation on the Arab scene. His army badly crushed, the leader's power base was for all practical purposes disintegrating. All the hopes he raised, and all the dreams he nursed were suddenly and severely shattered. Nasser's resignation and his being held accountable for the disaster must have been the logical outcomes of the situation. That this hasn't happened is due more to the manner in which Nasser used the communication outlets available to him, than it is to any other combination of factors. R. Stephens described what took place:

> "On the evening of 9 June, Nasser spoke to the nation over radio and television. On the screen he appeared a broken man. His features were drawn and haggard, his voice half choking and hesitant as he read the text of his speech. The enemy (he said) had struck with a stronger blow than had been expected, showing that 'there were other forces behind him which came to settle their account with the Arab Nationalist Movement'. He announced that he had decided to give up all his official posts and every political role . . . He had asked Zacharia Mohieddin to take over the post of President of the Republic . . ." (Stephens 1972:506).

There are essentially three elements in this appearance-speech that need to be taken into account. A--Nasser's sympathy arousing appearance: The belligerent, always

smiling and outspoken leader was now a defeated man. Lacouture captured the essential meaning of this, "It was not wisdom that they expected from the chief, but physical presence, warm and fleshy. He seemed all the more real now that he was obviously at fault and unhappy . . . A rapport of personification and incorporation." (Lacouture 1973: 312-313). B--There were also Nasser's accusation that the 'Arab Nationalist Movement' was the target of the attack and that other forces were behind Israel. He, in other words, is the victim of an international conspiracy bent upon defeating the Arab Nationalist Movement, he claimed to represent. The implication, one senses, is that submission to this conspiracy is the ending of the era of independence. The dream of Arab unity, he implied, would also forever be buried. C--Nasser's nomination of Mr. Mohieddin to replace him was a gamble he knew he couldn't lose. A founding member of the free officers movement responsible for the 1952 revolution, Mr. Mohieddin was an efficient technocrat who had opposed some of Nasser's most frivolous policies. The President and his men have unfairly depicted him as a pro-Western who would eventually lead Egypt into the imperialist fold. He was projected to the people as a symbol of retreat and compromise.

Needless to say, thousands of people took to the streets in a spontaneous outpouring of National solidarity. Nasser's resignation, many argued, should not be the result

of external pressures. To the world outside, this didn't make much sense. If Nasser was indeed responsible for the defeat, as he has admitted, then why keep him on the helm of power? The answer to this questions has not yet been fully answered. Part of the answer, however, lays in Nasser's use of television -- this extremely volatile medium. He was for the first time, in a period of crisis, able to reach the people live. Thus when all the elements that went into this stunning comeback are sorted out, the leader's ability to communicate his message so directly and so dramatically should not be treated slightly.

Nasser's clever use of television in his attempt to regain the confidence of the Egyptian people, after it was abundantly clear that his power base was all but eradicated, is perhaps the most extreme example of the manner in which neo-charismatic leaders manipulate the communication channels available to them. It is perhaps also true that not too many of these leaders have used society's communication channels to the extent to which Nasser has. However, no less an authority than Edward Shils has written that such an exercise may indeed be a prerequisite among newly independent states for the emergence of the nation-state. He wrote that "Demagogy, or rhetorical charisma, which used to be called 'rabble-rousing' and is now called 'mobilization of the masses', sometimes appears to be a short cut to this objective." (Pye 1963:64).

Using All Channels

A full account of Nasser's communication strategy is beyond the scope of this paper, since the channels used are too many to enumerate. The depth and the breadth of this strategy will, hopefully, become less obscure as a result of our attempt to understand the manner in which it operated.

1--Radio and Television: Nasser's communication strategy has relied rather heavily on radio, especially in the first decade following the revolution. As was mentioned earlier, the change in name of the Ministry of Information to the Ministry of National Guidance was clearly indicative of the significance given to its functions. Douglas Boyd in an article on the Development of Egypt's Radio described the early importance given this instrument, "Egypt's government therefore inherited a modestly staffed and equipped radio service which in 1952 had no short wave capability and only 72 Kilowatts . . .[which grew] . . . to more than one-half million watts by 1956 . . . and that by 1960 the total medium and short-wave power was over 1.3 million watts." (Boyd 1975:645-651).

Why was all this emphasis placed on radio when other sectors of the impoverished Egyptian society may have better used the funds involved? Daniel Lerner provided a significant part of the answer. "Nasser," he maintained, "has converted his earlier view that Egyptian society was not 'ready' for mass participation into a more daring hypothesis,

that he can use the mass media to achieve national consensus without unduly raising public demands for full participation. This feat hinges upon effective control of the media, along with all other channels of access to the Egyptian mass." (Lerner 1958:251). But in the Nasserist scheme, radio was not only a means of achieving national consensus (within Egypt), but an instrument whose ultimate function is to enhance his prestige throughout the Arab World. Boyd noted that "Nasser's accomplishments had been broadcast to every corner of the Arab World." (Boyd 1975:649). In a society whose traditions are oral in origin, radio tends to replace story tellers and the like. A. Loya described this phenomenon, "It should be noted", he wrote, "that there is hardly an Arab who does not buy a radio set as soon as he can afford it . . . the advent of the transistor radio made things considerably easier. . ." (Loya 1962:100). Given this condition, it is no wonder then that Nasser's reputation and appeal became increasingly predominant and especially in view of his early accomplishments including the nationalization of the Suez Canal Company.

Certain events, however, combined to reduce the impact and influence of Nasser's radio over the Arab masses. To begin with, the dissolution of the United Arab Republic as a result of Syria's withdrawal has greatly undermined Nasser's reputation in the area. Secondly, attacks against other Arab regimes, and especially Saudi Arabia whom Nasser

attacked over the Yemen conflict, did not produce the results he hoped for and consequently put into question his ability and judgement. In the process, the Arab radio listeners became more discriminating and more critical. Suffice it to say, however, that radio has played such a crucial role in Nasser's overall policy that U.N. Secretary General D. Hammarskjold asked for its "disarmament" and that Nasser's response then was, "If you ask me for radio disarmament, it means that you are asking me for complete disarmament." (Boyd 1975:651).

Radio Cairo's discredited role in the 1967 war, including its infamous campaign of lies and exaggerations, brought about the end of its prominence and the beginning of a new medium -- television. Television's basic deficiency for a mass-persuasion-minded leadership is its localism. The fact that local television services in other Arab countries have removed from Radio Cairo a substantial number of its listeners has further eroded its impact. On the other hand, television served Nasser well at a moment of near collapse in the aftermath of Egypt's defeat in the Six-day War. The image of a broken leader groping for dignity must have touched a large number of people. In bringing the leader to the living rooms and the cafes of Cairo, television kept Nasser afloat against great odds.

2--<u>The Press</u>: The Egyptian press is one of the oldest in the third world. Having started with the advent

of the French occupation at the end of the 18th century, it has maintained a robust and vigorous amount of freedom until Nasser, sensing its potential to his communication strategy, nationalized it in 1960. Unlike radio, the press was privately owned, and less willing to advocate without discussion of all of the government programs. A variety of measures designed to subordinate the press were undertaken (including the publishing of government owned papers), but they have all ended in failure. Having been nationalized, the press became another viable instrument in the leader's drive to mobilize the masses.

The extent of Nasser's involvement in the day-to-day operation of the press reveals something about the priority communication takes in his overall policy. Prior to nationalization, Nasser used to read the papers daily in order to "decide whether the editors and censors did their job well. If not, they will soon hear about it". (St. John 1960:227). After the nationalization, his involvement became even steeper since he was known to interfere in such things as what is a proper headline and was often "putting his hand on the brush-proof", and would be "voraciously rereading the proof itself". (Lacouture 1973:358).

So important has the press been for Nasser's style of leadership that his closest protege, M. Heykal, was the editor and publisher of one of Cairo's papers. In his

capacity as "the principal cook in the kitchen of Egyptian politics under Nasser", Heykal's task was to "prepare the political theatre for his boss." (F. Mattar 1974:10). His weekly column was read by those who wanted to understand the leadership's thinking, but also served to supply the various opinion leaders with cues as to what ought to be stressed and advocated and what ought to be avoided or ridiculed. Cairo's newspaper daily circulation of 800,000 (in 1968) reached only 28 out of 1000 inhabitants. (Almaney 1972:346). As such, it directly reached only a small number of readers, but many of those were local influentials and party members who dissiminated the leadership's line. It was all part of the leader's effort to "mold the masses' opinions to his own liking . . ."

"Nasser wanted the Egyptians to know only what he thought they ought to know . . . creating opinions in them arousing their passions, and motivating them to strive for the country's (his) goals." (Almaney 1972:348).

3--Educational and socialization systems: The manner in which the educational and other socialization systems have been used to glorify Nasser and project him as the embodiment of Arab unity, of justice and of peace, is central to a proper perception of the period. In the educational sphere this involves the creation of new courses on "National enlightenment" and other such subjects. The primary objective of such courses was to educate the students on the

relationship between the leader and the "dialectics of Arab history". Simply stated this means that without Nasser's leadership and vision, the Arab people would continue to be backward and unimportant. Traditional courses were also changed to accomodate this trend and emphasis. P. Vatikiotis noted that "Both the Minister of Education and the Director-General of the Ministry in 1958 argued the importance of 'directed' and directive' education". (Vatikiotis 1961:129).

So pervasive has been the emphasis on the leader and his view of history that Dekmejian observed that "A cursory survey will reveal that the Nasserite historian did not possess a real choice; the imperatives of his present narrowed his choice to the adoption and glorification of only one period (in Arab history), one dynasty, and one ruler -- Salah al-Din al-Ayyubi". (Dekmejian 1971:77). Similarly, book authors and publishers were urged to adhere to this "directiveness". "For this purpose," writes Vatikiotis, "a higher council of Arts, Letters, and Social Sciences was decreed by the government to direct, supervise, and channel literary, artistic, and research activities within the prescribed goals of the Revolution". (Vatikiotis 1961:126). Hundreds of books, fictional and non-fictional were published in praise of the leader, his vision and accomplishments. Many Egyptian writers, in the relatively open period following the Six-day War, have criticized this

homogenization process and "called for the lifting of government censorship on literature". (Dekmejian 1971:267).

This rigid censorship, which served the leader so well, resulted in the decline of the thriving and critical Egyptian theatre. Newsreels and movies, which by now were reaching larger segments of the population, became also engulfed in this campaign. But more significant, in an oral society, is the process by which the leader employed the traditional authoritarian segments of the society for the pursuit of his elevation. There is, in fact, no definitive account of how precisely this is accomplished.

4--The Leader's Rhetoric: No aspect of the third world's leader's communication strategy is more critical than his ability to directly speak to his people and arouse in them an appreciation for his plans and dreams. In a society so respectful of authority and oratorical skill, as the Egyptians are, the leader's ability to forcefully and imaginatively articulate some of the people's grievances and ambitions is vital to both. Nasser's rhetorical strategy involves more than his speaking style. It involves the image he intentionally projects. It also involves the symbols, the slogans and the code words he deems helpful to his message. Finally, as a public speaker, the leader's style and his ability to retain the attention and the interest of the listeners is extremely vital.

Earlier in his career, Nasser was a timid speaker who as a conspirator was both fearful and distrustful of

the people. He preferred the back seats to the speaker's platform. Robert St. John observed that "At the same time of the revolution Nasser was one of the world's worst public speakers. He had neither personal nor political magnetism." (St. John 1960:237). Leadership cannot, of course, be solely built around the leader's speaking ability. He has to share something with his audience, and this something was the nationalization of the Suez Canal. Lacouture witnessed this event and eloquently described it, "He spoke in a familiar tone, what Egyptians call baladi, the popular language, this time, not straining for a noble style as he had done before. The austere disciplinarian was transformed into a popular singer . . .

Gamal (Nasser) went on, mimicking diplomats and caricaturing their statements. This timid man had just discovered in the depths of his anger, how to talk to the people". (Lacouture 1973:169).

Eventually Nasser's speeches took on a ritualistic form which begins usually with the media advertising and speculating about his upcoming speech. The day he delivers his speech, radio and television interrupt their regular programming in order to describe the events beginning with the moment he leaves his home to the moment he returns to it. Prior to the speech a radio broadcaster famous for his hair-raising rhetorical ability introduces Nasser in words designed to elicit the greatest amount of response

from the audience. Radio and television broadcast a large number of songs by Egypt's best singers "lavishing praise" on him as the hero of unity, prosperity and freedom. (Boyd 1975:647).

In promoting his "myth", Nasser was aided by a towering physical presence as well as a sense of confidence. Robert St. John saw the significance of this asset, "Many of them (Egyptians) have bodies wracked by illness. His is straight and strong. He is the mirror in which they see their own reflection; the reflection of themselves as they would like to be." (St. John 1960:237). This is further supplemented by the usage of provocative slogans designed to enhance the leader's myth by linking it to significant national aspirations. The strength and appeal of these slogans is a function of their pertinence and timeliness. Thus when Nasser admonished his countrymen to "Lift your head, comrade, the time of humiliation has passed!", he was in fact articulating their deepest yearning. (Lacouture 1973:276). Another slogan that was often invoked by Nasser, "We have an appointment with destiny", attempted to link the hope of unity, and thus progress, to Nasser's leadership and vision. It was the promise of progress and fulfillment, based to be sure upon some tangible accomplishments, that gave Nasser's speeches the aura they enjoyed.

Nasser's ability to "sway audiences" has improved remarkably, leading M. Khadduri, one of the Arab World's

most astute observers to remark that "he began to indulge in oratory, and he soon excelled in rhetorical speeches . . .

"The manner in which he made public speeches was deliberately intended to excite the masses -- although most of his speeches were verbose and repetitious". (Khadduri 1973:60). Although a systematic exploration of Nasser's speeches is beyond the scope of this project, nevertheless, his speech on the occasion of the nationalization of the Suez Canal should be fairly sufficient to present the leader-speaker at his best.

The first observation, and one that Lacouture noted, is that in this speech Nasser has abandoned the tradition of speaking in strictly classical Arabic. His use of a mixture of classical and colloquial language was an indication of the ease he felt since he was now on the offensive on an issue in which he knew the Egyptian people approved. The second observation is one that is related to the excessively repetitious tone of the speech especially when one notes the number of times (25) he repeated statements carrying the same meaning. A third observation involves the use of what M. Suleiman terms "fantastic metaphors". Statements such as "Arab Nationalism has been set afire from the Atlantic Ocean to the Persian Gulf" attest to this tendency in his speaking style. Fourthly, is Nasser's strategy of building a common front with the audience in a manner designed to instill the feeling

of "us against them". Here Nasser's use of code and suggestive words and meanings has served him rather well. Thus when he asserts that "We, the whole of Egypt in one front, a national block, united, announce that the whole of Egypt will fight . . .", he in effect is trying to create a link connecting the leadership to the people. Another vivid example is contained in his reference to World Bank conditions as "Guardianship . . . over the Egyptian Government . . . "

Throughout his speech Nasser raises the spectre of foreign domination and injury to the Egyptian independence as the alternative to his proud and "dignified" leadership. This, one must remember, is a common theme running through most of his speeches. It is precisely this theme that dominated Nasser's resignation speech, and one that probably tipped the scales in his favor at a point when his leadership suffered its most devastating setback. M. Suleiman explained the reasoning for this emphasis, "Dignity, honor, grandeur, and pride may and do mean something to a Westerner. However, they do not carry the same connotation or arouse the same feelings and passions in him as they do in an Arab." (Prosser 1973:294).

5--Opinion Leaders: Opinion leaders, as have already been indicated in the previous chapter are "those individuals from whom others seek advice and information." (E. Rogers 1962:208). The centrality of opinion leaders to the communication process is well documented by Lazarsfeld and others

(1944). As interpreters and transmitters of news and information, Opinion Leaders perform extremely significant tasks expecially in societies where oral face-to-face communication is as important as it is in the Arab World. As James Mayfield correctly noted, "the popular village doctor, the influential ASU (party) leader, or the respected council chairman wield power and authority because of personal, face-to-face relationships that they have developed." (Mayfield 1971:288).

This process is especially apparent in the villages where, as Berger contends, "With only one party or none permitted, the central governments themselves, through the mass organizations they have set up, try to penetrate the villages and arouse a sense of national loyalty . . ." (Berger 1962:62). Authority structures in the rural areas become increasingly dependent upon the central government, so does the latter's influence. Thus not only is communication as it reaches the village highly favorable to the leader, but those who participate in its transmission and interpretation are similarly partial to him. In this process, again, radio and the newspaper are two of the most dramatic means by which the village is being exposed to the city as never before. Commenting on the significance of this process Lucian Pye notes that "the press and radio can have a profound influence in changing the ways of people only if they are fully supported by the informal, social channels

of communications which are intimately related to basic social processes." (Pye 1961:10). The Cafe, the corner grocery as well as other gathering places are used for this end. Daniel Lerner described the manner in which this takes place, "They hear, usually via the communal receiver at the village square in the presence of the local elite, the news and views selected for their ears by Egyptian State Broadcasting. Their receivers bring no alternative news from other radio stations." (Pye 1961:345).

The impact of such a communication strategy has been documented by no less an authority on the area than Berger and Berque. Dr. Ibrahim Abu-Lughod and a number of his students conducted a comprehensive study of the communication systems in six Egyptian villages. One of their most interesting findings is that "Eighteen of 45 farmers and fully 11 of the 13 'others' were told the news by someone else in the village." (J. Tunstall 1970:329). They concluded, therefore, that "Next to the radio, this personal or 'two-step' flow of communication from the mass media was the most important source of news in the village sample studied." (Ibid:329). The fact that opinion leaders are often of higher status reinforces the credibility of the message they are relaying. Another example of the use of high status oral communicators in this process is revealed in B. Borthwick's study of the Islamic Sermon as a Channel of Political Communication. In a highly religious culture

such as that of Egypt, the Friday sermon is an important statement on the people's religious, social and political affairs. The leader's directives and pronouncements are thus praised and justified Nasser's adversaries are discredited and obedience to his authority is encouraged. This is all the more possible since "Under the revolutionary regime the contents of the sermons have been controlled by the government." (Prosser 1973:373).

This cursory survey does not pretend to exhaust the extent or the size of Nasser's communication strategy. Certain aspects of this strategy such as rallies, political fairs and party propaganda must be included in any definitive accounting of this strategy and the extent to which it contributed to the durability and continuity of his leadership. This, then, is only meant to be a touching of the basis of an extensive campaign, to inform and influence, whose most unique feature is that it took into full account the environment surrounding it and proceeded to influence that environment. Lucian Pye articulated the impact and implications of this process, "There is a peculiarly intimate relationship between the political process and the communication process. For within the domain of politics the communication process has a fundamental function." (Pye 1961:6).

The relationship Pye speaks of is revealed through what Lerner called Nasser's syndrome. In a society of

believers, Nasser's communication strategy strove to depict him as the people's contract with a superior force. One of his most favorite slogans, as indicated earlier, is the promise of an "appointment with destiny". Nasser's communication strategy was thus not above resorting to the metaphysical and the supernatural.

The Feedback: A Serious Flaw

The basic problem in such a situation is the lack of adequate feedback. Leaders need feedback as a corrective or as an enforcer to steer them away from or further into their present course. But as R. Fagen observed, "The dominant flow is downward." (Fagen 1966:33). This is partly due to the leader's feeling that he is better qualified to formulate the issues. This feeling is often predicated upon the view that the masses lack the necessary maturity and awareness to make such decisions. It is also due, as L. Pappas noted, to the fact that "disciples -- or associates -- may serve as sources of information and as scapegoats for blame". (Pappas 1970:8). As sources of information the disciples are inclined to paint a brighter picture than really exists, and as scapegoats they shield the leader and provide him with the excuses necessary to keep his reputation unscathed. The dearth of feedback available to the leader, then, comes from such sources as the intelligence service, the size of leader-sponsored

rallies, and between-the-lines criticism in letters to the editor. This is a serious flaw in the leader's communication strategy and one that tends to spill over once the leader is no longer on the stage.

Conclusion

The significance of the manner in which society's communication channels are used in third world countries is a matter that seems to have received only a scant attention in most social science literature. This would not be a matter of great importance were it not for the fact that it leads to a great deal of confusion in identifying some of the most central variables and concepts. Weber's concept of charismatic leadership is a prime example of the facile manner in which a Western model is superimposed on a third world phenomenon. The vast number of post-colonial third world leaders who have been labeled charismatic should have opened our eyes to the concept's deficiency in terms of explaining this phenomenon.

In total agreement with Fiedler's contention that the situation plays a vital role in the development and emergence of leadership, this study has attempted to show that Nasser's leadership has been the product of Egypt's tormented political and social situation in the early 1950's and 1960's. Thus, to label Nasser as a charismatic leader is to miss the essentially calculating and cynically

astute nature of his leadership. From the day he assumed power, this paper attempts to point out, Nasser has employed all of society's channels of communication in the service of a grand "communication strategy" that played a vital role in his persistence in authority as the testimony of authorities like Daniel Lerner makes aptly clear.

Thus in almost all of the studies in which a serious attempt is made to unveil the nature of Nasser's leadership, the analysts have invariably concentrated on such variables as the system's material achievements (Nutting), its coercive and repressive mechanisms (Vatikiotis), the leader's charismatic power (Dekmejian and Lacouture) or such a strange notion as BARAKAH (an Arabic term roughly meaning blessings). Consequently the leader's communication strategy, while occasionally alluded to, is seen as an insignificant aspect of his rule. The sparse amount of analytical treatment devoted to the system's communication strategy as a viable base of power is a prime cause for the confusion. To say that communication was a viable base of power is not to say that Nasser's leadership was drawn solely from it. This study's central contention, then, centers around a recognition of the influence communication plays along side such crucial elements as the economic and political bases of power.

As the previous chapter attempts to point out, Nasser's communication strategy left no corners unturned.

It was in the school curriculum, in the street and cafe gatherings and in the music, the radio and the movies. As such it spanned all the available boundaries of society and utilized all the conceivable channels. In his drive to convince and persuade Nasser had a culturally homogenous population to address. This, of course, is an advantage that leaders such as Sukarno and Nkrumah did not enjoy, and one that could explain their demise whereas Nasser was able to maintain his rule despite obvious mistakes and misguided adventures. Another advantage that Nasser seems to have enjoyed is the availability of a relatively competent group of experts who were able to draw on the experience of other governments both in terms of devising and implementing this communication strategy. (Copeland, 1969:99). It is worthwhile to remember at this point that despite a discernible improvement in his speech delivery and occasional moments of rapport with his audience, Nasser has never achieved the oratorical excellence of someone like Hitler. Otto Strasser described this aspect of Hitler's power:

> "His words go like an arrow to their target, he touches each private wound on the raw, liberating the mass unconscious, expressing its innermost aspirations, telling it what it most wants to hear." (Bullock 1964:374).

Thus a leader of a post-colonial third world country is capable through the use of the various communication outlets -- provided, of course, that he has the expertise and a reasonable degree of cultural homogeneity -- to

influence his impressionable population in a manner consistent with his ambitions and programs. And it is precisely this aspect of the study that needs to be more closely examined by social scientists, and especially communication students. This need is predicated upon two factors:

A -- As third world governments become more and more acquainted with the potentially powerful impact of communication strategies upon their populations, they may be inclined to institute such strategies as integral parts of their rule. Communication, thus, becomes not an instrument of information but one of control. The low level of education in many of these countries makes this all the more possible.

B -- A corrollary concern is the fact that while it is patently clear that effective utilization of communication channels can enhance the goals of national development, it is equally clear that it can be used for the opposite goals. Egypt's case is clearly instructive. After the debacle of the six day war Nasser initially justified the defeat on the grounds that American and British planes were providing Israel with a "protective umbrella". (Lacouture 1973:309). When it became known to the public that this explanation-justification was in variance with the facts, Nasser resorted to semi-metaphysical explanations, "Brothers, perhaps God wanted to test us to judge whether we deserve what we have achieved . . . etc." (Prosser 1973:314).

Nasser has earlier used similar arguments in defense of his army's failure in its Yemen expedition. What we have then is a case of the leader using his monopoly over communication channels in a manner that is at once blatantly deceptive and an aid in his attempt to escape public accountability.

The cumulative impact of this use of communication was echoed by Egypt's most renowned writer, Tawfig Al-Hakeem, "He (Nasser) controlled the people's mind in a manner similar to the impact of drugs . . ." (Al-Ahram, 1975)

Perhaps the ultimate testimony is contained in the suddeness with which Nasser fell from public favor in his country. For today, not only is Nasser's name and reputation the subject of daily examination and often condemnation, but his policies and commitments seem to have largely been reversed. "The image of the late President Nasser of Egypt," wrote the Christian Science Monitor, "is crystallizing as a major political issue . . ." (Thursday, February 26, 1967). It is this fact of Nasser's leadership and its apparently time-bound nature that explains what Western intellectuals mistook to be "charismatic" for what in reality was a well orchestrated communication strategy. R. Bendix termed this "a lacuna in Weber's approach to charisma." Weber, according to Bendix, "did not foresee that it would be possible to simulate publicly all aspects of charismatic leadership - saturating all channels of

communication so that no one could escape the message." (Bendix, 1968:625).

This, I would argue, is radically different from Weber's original concept of charismatic leadership, for it rests not on the leader's inner qualities, but on his ability to conceive and execute an image of himself that gives the semblance and not the substance of charismatic leadership.

This, then, is a case of engineered consent, or neo-charismatic leadership, in as much as it fails to exhibit those qualities deemed essential to a charismatic leader. There is another sense in which the engineered nature of this brand of leadership is readily demonstrable. The string of failures -- Syria's secession, the Yemen war, the Six Day war as well as economic difficulties -- that followed the leader's initial successes should have been sufficient to undermine his authority. That they have not, is due in large measure to his ability to communicate and project, without competition, an image and a persona that could not sustain the light of day once this monopoly ceased to exist as a result of his departure.

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